LIFESTYLE / D1
Filipino designer Josie Natori makes headlines in US again

METRO / A25
Binay says Makati paralyzed by BIR seizure of its assets

NEWS / A2
Defensor wails he's the most criticized candidate for Senate

NEWS / A4
Sen. Serge Osmeña rushed to hospital, undergoes angioplasty

NEWS / A8
JIL hits demolition of its church inside Villamor Air Base

Esperon 'clueless' why he is likened to Ver

By Christine O. Avendaño

ARMED FORCES CHIEF of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. does not get it.

He cannot understand why former Senator Presidential Antonio Trillanes IV is comparing him to Ferdinand Marcos' martial law enforcer Fabian Ver.

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, May 4, 2007 | 44 | 18 sections | Vol. 21 / No. 145 | P18 | www.inquirer.net

SC orders Comelec: Name party-list nominees

By Lala B. Sidayen and Jerome Aning

UPHOLDING THE PEOPLE'S CONSTITUTIONAL rights to information and the need for transparency in governments, the Supreme Court ordered the Commission on Elections to immediately disclose the names of the party-list nominees set to face contempt.

Cory's phone bugged

PLDT crew discovers 'crude' device

THE ICON OF PEOPLE POWER had long suspected it, and now her suspicion has been proven true.

A bugging device connected to the telephone line of former President Corazon Aquino at her Quezon City residence was found on Wednesday by co-workers, who immediately informed her about it.

The Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. confirmed the discovery of the device, which both National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula, director of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD), described as "very crude."

The discovery further heated up the political atmosphere, with Aquino's only son, Senator Opposition senatorial candidate Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, yesterday demanding that the government do something about it.

"We are challenging the government to take the necessary steps to arrest [the persons behind] this new discovery," Senator Aquino told reporters on the sidelines of a forum in Lord Merchant restaurant.

Citing Article 3 of the Constitution and the Anti-Wiretapping Law, Noynoy Aquino said bugging violated the privacy of an individual and added that other opposition candidates could be "targets" as well.

CONTD A22

DEADLY TIMES EVEN FOR MAN'S BEST FRIEND

About 115 dogs in cages inside a jeepney were seized by authorities at A. Bonifacio, Quezon City, on their way to Baguio City from Navarro, Batangas. They were to be reportedly sold in the capital of the Mountain Province where dog meat is a local delicacy. The confiscated dogs are now in the City Pound Division, Office of the City Veterinarian, Manila.

Anti-Marcos 'stars' to join indignation rally for Burgos son

By Maryann C. Orcia, Allison M. Lopez and Jocelyn R. Uy

SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS REJECTED OVER the abduction of Jonas Joseph Burgos allegedly by security forces, friends and fans alike closed ranks yesterday, lighting candles over the grave of his father, world prominent Joe Burgos, and preparing to launch today in protest.

Among those joining the march is the human rights group Bahlai, many of whose members were in the Lenanco Aquino Cabinets and some who are now in the Arroyo administration. Also scheduled to attend are party-list groups Akbayan and Bayan Muna and the media colleagues of Joe Burgos.

Supporters trooped to the family home in San Miguel, Bulacan, where Joe Burgos is buried, amid his widow Edith.

"They laid flowers on the grave of my late husband, who is buried in one of the hills there, to commemorate World Press

ANTS PANCHO A22

Filipino killed in Baghdad rocket attack

By Tarra Quismundo

A FILIPINO WORKING FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT was killed in a rocket attack on Iraq's heavily fortified Green Zone, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

In a statement, the department said it was able to confirm only one Filipino fatality, not four as reported by the US Embassy in Baghdad. The Filipino's name was not immediately known.

It was the third straight day that extremists used rockets and mortars to hit the area where Iraq's parliament meets, according to The Associated Press.

It cited the embassy as saying that Wednesday's attack left 11 "with a profound sense of sadness and regret" over the loss of the Filipino.

"Those four colleagues, citizens of the Philippines, were integral members of our military community," US Charge d'Affaires Daniel Speckhard was quoted as saying.

"We value their contributions to our efforts on behalf of the people of Iraq, and we mourn their passing."

In a statement released shortly after news of the rocket attack broke in Manila, Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs Esteban Conejos Jr. said the latest

FULL REPORT A10

8 Filipino workers kidnapped in Nigeria

By Tarra Quismundo

ARMED RESISTERS SEIZED EIGHT FILIPINO WORKers in a power plant in Nigeria before dawn yesterday, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

Citing initial reports from the Philippine Embassy in the Nigerian capital of Abuja, Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs Esteban Conejos

Texas Instruments picks RP over China for $1-B plant

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

CHOOSING THE PHILIPPINES OVER China, Texas Instruments Inc., the world's biggest maker of mobile phone chips, will build a $1 billion semiconductor facility in the Clark Freeport Zone, a development that President Macapagal-Arroyo dubbed a vote of confidence in the country.

"We are happy to announce one of the single biggest investments in our economic history—the expansion of Texas Instruments in the Clark Freeport Zone, [CFZ] in the amount of $1 billion," Ms Arroyo said yesterday at the Malacañang reception held after the test with TI and Cabinet and CFZ officials.

A day before Ms Arroyo announced the huge investment, Bidoodtong said the President was going to make a "big announcement" and invited the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines and the Manila Overseas Press Club to cover the news yesterday morning.

He said the TI facility would cover eight hectares and employ more than 2,000 workers, and double the capacity of TI's existing plant in Baguio City which has been in operation for 20 years.

"We thank Texas Instruments for its continuing confidence in the Philippines. Competition was fierce among the different possible sites in Asia, all wanting to get the $1 billion in their pieces," Ms Arroyo said.

TEXAS A10

A BEAMING President Arroyo announces the good news as Che Palisoc, Behind are Texas Instruments senior vice president Kevin Ritchie (left) and Trade Secretary Peter Favila.

GMA vowed to distribute Mike A's sugar lands

FARMER POWER: Farmers hold a protest rally last December at the Department of Agriculture office in Quezon City.

By Fernando del Mundo
(First of three parts)

FOUR MONTHS AFTER GLORIA MACAPAGAL Arroyo rose to power in 2001, she vowed to redistribute her husband's sugar plantations to give meaning to agrarian reform, cornerstone of a government program to enrich millions of Filipinos from the poverty trap and promote social justice.

"Land not grumbling communists. I am invoking Dr. in my love and charity," Ms Arroyo proclaimed four months after she became president. "Time justice, development, democracy and reconciliation will not happen without the willingness of the elite to share or give up some of the wealth and power."

Using the revolutionary language of leftist movements urging land reform from Latin America to Asia, Ms Arroyo made her promise after impeached followers of ousted President Joseph Estrada rampaged in Manila and nearly toppled her in what became known as the Edsa-Tres Rev."

The promise has a somewhat hollow ring to it today—a year before the expiration of the land acquisition drive under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). Gen. President Corazon Aquino, fresh from the triumph of the People Power Revolution, promulgated in 1988.

Against 6,402 hectares Hacienda Luisita, Tarlac ironically one the few beneficiary of a corporate arrangement under CARP to weasel out of the program by introducing the "stock distribution option"

GMA A12

AGRARIAN REFORM
I-TEAM Report

Mike A drops 17 libel cases vs journalists

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SAYING HE PREFERRED TO STAY IN TOUCH with God for giving him a new lease on life, President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband yesterday said he would drop all the libel cases he had filed against scores of media journalists.

In a two-page statement read by Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo said he wanted to make peace with his detractors after surviving

MIKE A A14

Second FRONTPAGE

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
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WEATHER FORECAST

UNO bucks LP nomination

Comelec chair orders review of selection of dominant minority party

By Jerome Aning

THE UNITED OPPOSITION (UNO) YESTERDAY said it would contest the Commission on Elections' selection of the Liberal Party as the dominant minority party which would be entitled to a copy of the election returns (ERs) in the May 14 polls.

UNO assistant Sixto Brillantes Jr. questioned the Comelec's counting of party statistics, saying it counted the Nacionalista Party Filipino's numbers separately when the PMP was part of the UNO coalition.

"The selection process appears to have been rigged. This is a serious matter for the opposition and we will file a motion for clarification and correction," Brillantes said in a phone interview.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr. in a separate interview said he had asked the poll body's law department to study the complaint.

"I'm ordering a review," he said.

Abalos also rejected Brillantes' accusation of rigging, saying: "If they think we were wrong, they should have called our attention formally and we would have looked into their basis."

He recalled the Comelec had reportedly told the opposition parties "to get their act together to spare us in the Comelec a major headache," after the Comelec had a hard time figuring out which party belonged to the opposition since some of them claimed to have candidates running under administration parties.

On May 2, the Comelec en banc passed Resolution No. 7827 designating the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats and the LP as the dominant majority and minority parties, respectively.

In coming up with its decision, the Comelec took into account the parties' showing in previous elections, the number of their nominees who were incumbent officials and those running in the May 14 polls, and their national organizational structures.

The resolution, also named 8583, PMP Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino, Kilusang Bagong Lipunan, Nacionalista Party, Coalition and Lakas ng Demokratikong Pilipino as the other major parties entitled to watchers to precincts and canvassing centers.

Brillantes said he could not understand why the Comelec had separate statistics for LDP and PMP. In the resolution, he said, LDP and PMP had 1,938 and 1,208 candidates, respectively, which if combined would be more than the LP's 2,089.

He said UNO had no problem with the LP since it has Comelec representation and an arrangement with the LP to share the ERs, which would list the vote tallies of the polling precincts.

The lawyer said UNO, composed of the PMP and the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Laban, had registered as a coalition and was not allied as such by the Comelec in December last year.

"They had months to study (the selection process), they apparently didn't do their homework," he said.

Loren denies junking mates

By Norman Bordadora and Kristine L. Alave

GANGLING OPPOSITION CANDIdate Loren Legarda roared the day she said having yanked 10 teams of her teammates in the wake of reports that a GO candidate had dropped three fellow GO candidates who ostensibly figured in the top four slots in recent surveys.

Legarda said she would not do that to Senate President Manuel Villar, Sen. Bartlet Lozano and Farmers Rep. Francis Escudero, and particularly not to Escudero who is her partner.

"If you look closely at my campaign materials, I have the names of my fellow candidates in the GO slate written on them. Even my campaign letterhead includes their names," Legarda said.

Lacson said a Pangasinan mayor had told him that a GO candidate had left out his name and those of Villar and Escudero from the sample ballots that the candidate had printed. He did not name Legarda but subsequent reports mentioned her name.

Escudero urged everyone in the slate to keep calm and stay united in the remaining weeks of the campaign.

"Remember, our rivals now unite, argue for an alliance now not each other. It is important for us not to jump to conclusions," he said.

Meanwhile, three more opposition senatorial candidates and one independent have been added to the list of candidates being supported evangelist Eddie Villanueva and his group of evangelical organizations which include, besides the Villanueva-led Jesus is Lord Movement, the Philippines for Jesus Movement, Bayan Filipino Movement and the benefactors for the Philippines group.

At a press briefing, Villanueva said his group was endorsing GO candidates Rep. Benigno Aquino III, Legarda and Aquilino Pimentel III.

Villanueva said it could not be helped that their choices were all opposition candidates as the administration-backed Team Unity had snubbed them.

Bishop Leo Monaga, national vice-chair of the PJM and a member of the selection panel, said the group was open to endorsing Team Unity candidates.

The candidates were chosen because they are God-fearing, competent, patriotic, principled, and have good character, courage, and compassion for the poor, he said.

The coalition's total number slip is estimated at about 5 million, Villanueva said they expect at least 7% percent of their flock to vote for the candidates endorsed by their leaders.

Pimentel said the million of votes from the religious coalition would propel him to the top 12.

"I am sure out of dignity Aruego won't," he said.

Villanueva said a TU candidate topped the competency evaluation during the group's preliminary review. another TU candidate also showed high marks in terms of character.

For the past month, Aruega and they have received "feelers" from TU candidates, saying they were willing to submit themselves to the interrogation process of the selection committee. He said the panel's next scheduled meetings are for TU candidates.

"We have been waiting for them, but they didn't show up. Maybe they think President Macapagal-Arroyo's endorsement is enough," he said.

Aruega said the group would announce another batch of 6-seven candidates next week.

MOTHER FIGURE Villanueva stands over his fiefdom: Nograles Aquino, Francis Pangilinan, Loren Legarda and Rebel Pimentel

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Give me a break, Defensor pleads

By Cynthia D. Balana

DAVAO CITY—ENOUGH IS enough.

Saying he was the most criticized senatorial candidate during the campaign, Sonny Osmeña's Defensor yesterday appealed to the "spin masters" to give him a break.

Speaking to reporters traveling with the Team Unity Mindanao caravan at the home of Rep. Lucilo Bautista in Carmen, Davao del Norte, Defensor said he was tired of having to defend himself against the boldface thrown at him for the controversies being said in his name.

"I realized after one and a half years of campaigning that I was the most criticized senatorial candidate," Defensor said.

He said most of the issues raised against him were not true.

He said he was looking at the surveys and hoped that the "black propaganda being spread through text messages and statements by people who do not want him to win.

"I'm hoping the people's magazine statements about me would change in the last days of the campaign," he said.

What went wrong

Asked what went wrong in his campaign, Defensor said "nothing," except that he was identified with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Identified ako kay GMA dapat ko ipagmalaki kasi ang ganda ng record ng Presidente (I identified myself with President.) I think. People feel that in Team Unity I represent a president who is unpopular," he said.

But, he said, his losing pre-oil nominations were also an advantage in the campaign period.

"Many like what I've said and done. Everything I've done, I did you for my personal interest but for the country. That is why in my campaign sportsfest I ask the people to help me because I feel they I am the most criticized candidate," he said in Filipino.

Defensor cited as an example his negotiations with the rebel military officers during the Oakwood mutiny in 2003 and the foiled coup d'etat in February last year.

No regrets

"I warned Oakwood to negotiate so that no one would get hurt and there would be minimum damage to property. Did we hear from the opposition? No. On Feb. 24, 2006, there was a coup attempt. Did they (opposition) speak up? Imagine if the coup succeeded. There would have been trouble, people would die. So for all the things I usual for and did, I have no regrets," he said, about Filipinos.

On his reported rift with fellow TU candidate Loren Legarda, Defensor said it was a closed case because it was not true.

He said he never called Gingoyon a TU party mates. Cesar Montano and Sultan Arnaldo Imam "senatorial candidates" or said their independent senatorial candidate Gregorio Honasan might replace one of them after the latter was released on bail from detention on murder charges.

He said Legarda, Gingoyon was his protégé and their friendship went down to each other.

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Serge O rushed to hospital, undergoes angioplasty

SEN. ROGELIO OSMEÑA III, THE CAMPAIGN manager of the Genuine Opposition senatorial ticket, was rushed to the hospital yesterday complaining of "chest pains" and immediately underwent angioplasty procedure.

GO spokesman Ariel Tamano said Osmeña was recovering from the one-hour procedure and would stay in the hospital overnight.

Osmeña was brought to the Makati Medical Center at about 4:15 p. m. from his office at the Iscom building in Pasay City, according to sources in the GO campaign headquarters.

Just an hour before, Osmeña left the GO campaign headquarters in Makati to go to his Senate office. He was at his office when he experienced chest pains, GO sources said.

"He is conscious. He is still working and giving instructions," Tamano said in a press briefing at the GO headquarters last night.

Osmeña himself called up ABC to postpone a scheduled guesting last night.

Senate doctors had suspected Osmeña strained himself by carrying heavy objects at his Senate office. When he experienced chest pains, the resident doctor recommended that he be rushed to the hospital.

"He will not report for work tomorrow. It will depend on his recovery," Tamano said.

Osmeña took over as GO campaign manager last March, replacing Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri.

He was granted the campaign strategy during meetings with team campaign workers and urging the candidates to concentrate on increasing their presence in the media.

As a result, the 11 official GO candidates have been campaigning on their own.

Osmeña also named the campaign headquarters for the Manila Bulletin building on Intramuros, from the Shaw Blvd. office of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, the political party of deposed President Estrada. — **Erwin Penaflorida**

Correction

IN THE MAY 2 issue, the front-page banner story, "Letter rejects GMA's gift"—translated from Pres. Macapagal-Arroyo's executive order would exempt workers P18,500 a month from paying the income tax. Workers earning P18,500 and below would not be exempted from paying the monthly withholding tax—that is, their monthly income tax will not be deducted from their monthly pay. However, these workers will pay a lump sum representing the corresponding tax on their monthly wage when they file their income tax return.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Inquirer Desk, 4th floor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PEC Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Maocardo Street, Makati City, fax No. 897-07-03/897-07-07, e-mail address: thedesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Telephone-aired lack of response or objectively may be sent to letters editor, e-mail address: inquirer@inquirer.com.ph or fax No. 897-07-03/897-07-07. Any Readers Advocate (for Metro Manila) e-mail: 897-5000 local 342.

One of 2 voters says it's OK to take money, if...

ONE IN TWO REGISTERED VOTERS think that it is not wrong to accept money from candidates as long as one votes according to one's conscience," 58 percent agreed, 22 percent disagreed, while 16 percent were undecided, the

Those in the rural areas (66 percent) were found to be more likely to approve of accepting money compared to those in urban areas (43 percent), according to the SWS April 2007 pre-election survey released yesterday.

Fifty-four percent in the Visayas, 51 percent in Mindanao, 40 percent in the rest of Luzon and 43 percent in Metro Manila also agreed with the statement.

The survey, conducted between April 14 and 17, also showed that seven out of every 10 registered voters (69 percent) expected vote-buying to occur in their areas, while more than one-in-two (53 percent) reported alleged threats (vote manipulation) during the elections.

"Those who agree that it is not bad to accept money in an election are more likely to reject vote-buying and threats in election," SWS said in comment.

Among those who said that it was acceptable to accept money from candidates, 74 percent expected vote-buying, compared to 63 percent among those who disagreed with the statement.

Around four in every 10 registered voters also expected other destructive capabilities, such as flying votes (46 percent) and voter harassment (39 percent) to run the coming elections.

Belief in the probability of vote-buying happening in their area is highest in the Visayas (74 percent) and among urban residents (73 percent).

Nearly seven in 10 voters in Mindanao (68 percent), the rest of Luzon (66 percent), Metro Manila (67 percent) and among rural residents (67 percent) also shared this belief.

Those who finished college (75 percent) and high school (71 percent) were also more likely to expect vote-buying in their areas, compared to those with an elementary education (59 percent) or even less formal schooling (53 percent).

Meanwhile, belief in the probability of staging frauds and flying votes was highest in Metro Manila, with two-thirds of NCR voters reporting to have flying votes (66 percent) and shenanigans during the counting of the votes (66 percent).

Urban voters (60 percent) were also more likely to think that display-boxes would happen in their areas, compared to rural voters (47 percent). Metro urban voters also expect flying voters in their place, compared to rural voters (57 percent vs. 36 percent).

Fifty-six percent of voters in the rest of Luzon, 57 percent in the Visayas and 53 percent in Mindanao expected flying voters in their areas, while 49 percent in the rest of Luzon, 46 percent in Mindanao and 39 percent in the Visayas expected flying votes in their place.

Expectation of voter harassment is highest in Mindanao (43 percent), while 37 percent in Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, and 33 percent in the Visayas expect voters to be harassed in their areas. — **Sara Susanne D. Fabunan, Inquirer Research**

Cheche Lazaro to get UP Gawad Plaridel

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines College of Mass Communication has announced its choice of Cecilia "Cheche" L. Lazaro as recipient of the 2007 UP Gawad Plaridel.

The college said Lazaro was chosen for her outstanding contributions to the local television industry, her excellence and versatility in the field of television broadcasting as a journalist, producer and educator, and for producing critical and uncompromising programs that set the standard for Philippine broadcast journalism.

The award comes with a trophy by National Artist Napoleon Abueva which will be presented to Lazaro by UP officials on July 4 at the Cine Adarna of the UP Film Institute.

Lazaro will deliver a lecture on the topic on issues in contemporary Philippine television.

Established by the UP College of Mass Communication, the annual Gawad Plaridel recognizes Filipino media practitioners who have excelled in any of the media (print, radio, film, television and new media) and have performed with the highest level of professional integrity in the interest of public service.

On its fourth year, Gawad Plaridel's roster of honorees include Eugenio Lopez (2004), Silme Antone (2005) and Felida Magpayo (2006) who were recognized for their contributions to print, film and radio, respectively.

The award is named after Marcelo H. del Pilar, who used the pen name Plaridel, the self-less propagandist whose unwavering belief in the nationalist spirit and ignite liberation ideas in the 1890s.

Like Plaridel, a recipient of the award must believe in the union of a Philippine society that is equitable, participative and progressive, and in journalism that is socially responsible, critical and vigilant, liberating and transformative, free and independent, the award's creators said.

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INQUIRER

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, May 4, 2007
4th Week of Easter

1st Reading:	Acts 13:26-33
Gospel:	John 14:1-6

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not be troubled, trust in God and trust in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. I would not have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. After I have gone and prepared a place for you, I shall come again and take you to me, so that where I am, you also may be. So you know the way where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

Commentary:

The Good News is starkly simple (and true and relevant as expected) words and works by Peter and Jesus. Paul said Barnabas and company will do it in the life, the dying and rising of Jesus who is God's beloved Son and his life is now our life in baptism's resurrection if we repent and believe and listen in the words of God.

Jesus' words come to comfort us, to relieve us of worry, insecurity, and fear. Our way in life is the way of Jesus, the way to the Father, the way of the cross, the way of resurrection life, the way of God's community that seeks to reveal in their mind and living the Jesus in the way, the truth and the life of the world. It is up to us in every generation, in each place, to preach this with the power of the Spirit, with our gifts, imaginations, and zeal. How are we doing?

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'SLOPPY, TAINTED, PARTISAN WORK'

Team Unity files complaint vs SWS surveys

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By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

ACCUSING THE POLLING FIRM of bias and partisanship, the administration Team Unity has filed a formal complaint against the Social Weather Stations before the leading global organization of survey and communication science here.

Writing to the World Association for Public Opinion Research, Team Unity media director and Isaneros Gainer Gen. Ben Evardone accused the SWS of "engaging in unscrupulous branding practices and blatant partisanship in favor of the political opposition in the run-up to the Philippine mid-term elections on May 14."

The letter, dated April 30, was addressed to Dr. Allan McCutcheon, general secretary of WAPOR.

"It is necessary work for the political opposition, the SWS has created the publication [in the guise of] issues" predominantly of national surveys that showed the anti-national and unfairly defeatist perception of Filipino voters for opposition candidates in the senatorial, congressional and local posts up for grabs in the month's balloting," said Evardone.

Evardone cited an SWS survey that showed that voters preferred opposition candidates in most of the local races.

"The problem is the political opposition has no candidates for installation in 80 percent of local races. In, over 200 congressional races at stake in May 14, the local opposition does not have candidates in 60 districts and only 20 percent of its limited installations are competitive," he said in the letter.

Evardone also accused the SWS of using "slanted and asymmetric questions that virtually coerced survey respondents into validating the pro-opposition bias instead of eliciting true voters' preferences."

He cited as examples statements like, "PGMA, aside from the coffers of the country" and "PGMA will cheat in the coming elections in order for her candidates to win," in which respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed.

Evardone claimed that this particular SWS survey caused such a public "uproar" that it had to admit that the survey was contaminated by lies. Sergio Ortiz-Jr., the campaign manager of the Genuine Opposition coalition.

With its "sloppy, tainted and partisan result," the SWS has failed to give a clear picture of voters' preferences, he said.

"The SWS has done a great disservice to the polling profession and is about to muddle up the Philippine elections in an obvious attempt to condition the public on the supposed victory of the opposition on May 14," said Evardone.

"Polling firms are supposed to carry out ethical and unbiased surveys of voters' sentiments and not to work as a tool in furthering partisan interests. They are supposed to be free from biases and partisanship," he said.

According to Evardone, the SWS has been forced to resort to "incoherent and partisan work" because of financial difficulties. He claimed the polling organization has been abandoned by some of its partners and clients such as the ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and TNS Trends, the outfit that used to do the field work for SWS.

Team Unity wants teachers 'pre-paid' for poll duty

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

TEAM UNITY YESTERDAY RAISED FOR HIGHER pesos for public school teachers who would be in the front line of the May 14 elections.

ITU senatorial bet Ralph Recto yesterday suggested that teachers and other deputized election officers should be "pre-paid" for their poll duties including the transport allowance given to them for bringing voting paraphernalia to the precincts.

Recto said the government could easily advance the fees considering that P5.5 billion of the P5.7 billion allocated by Congress under the 2007 budget for the midterm elections have been released for "per diem, allowances, wages and honoraria" of election workers.

Poll-day elections are 11 days away. Recto said arrangements should be "now going full blast to ensure that the money has been delivered to the Department of Education (DepEd) before Friday, May 11, the last working day before the May 14 polls.

"What's it matter to poll-duties pay, teachers should be pre-paid, not post-paid. Or at least, they be paid half in advance, and the balance immediately after the elections. We shouldn't be sending them in batts without paying them first," he said.

Recto said he heard of complaints from teachers who did not received their P1,000 honorarium for works after the elections.

Some 930,000 public school teachers are expected to man 320,000 precincts where 43 million voters will troop to cast their votes for national and local election posts.

Another ITU senatorial bet Pimpen "Butch" Dichoy, rallied on the government to beef up candidate security and improve the pay of public school teachers.

"As members of the board of election inspectors and Board of Canvassers, teachers will be exposed to various dangers, pressures and stress on election day. It is only right that they be given enough security and compensation before, than after they are receiving cues," Dichoy said.

Pichay noted that some teachers' groups have called on the government to make poll duty voluntary. Pichay said some teachers were wary of the risks in their polling duty especially in hot spots that some have opted to file a letter of absence during election day.

Trillanes hopes to do a Honasan

THE LAWYER OF DE-tained senatorial candidate Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes is hoping for clues would evaporate the same surge of popularity that Gringoria Honasan did upon being re-launched.

"We were encouraged when Honasan was granted bail," said Reynaldo Holdez, Trillanes' counsel, after yesterday's oral hearing before Judge Cleto Pi-mentel of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148.

The lawyer said he expects the court to resolve Trillanes' urgent petition to be allowed to post bail early next week. By Jig

VILLAMOR DEMOLITION

Bro. Eddie cries harassment

By Tarra Quismundo

EVANGELIST AND OPPOSITION LEADER Eddie Villamor has accused the government of harassment over the demolition of the church of his home in Cavite now inside the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

"Can this be another brazen political harassment? The timing is suspect because JE, but just relevant? Is he another candidate we are not aware, and all of these are from the opposition," said Villamor, who has been a supporter of President Macapagal-Arroyo since losing the 2004 presidential race to her in 2004.

The JE church in Villamor is a converted theater which was set up more than 20 years ago for the community of artists and retired soldiers and their families inside the Philippine Air Force base.

On Tuesday, a demolition team from PAF tore down the JE church which, Villamor claimed, resulted in the displacement of a congregation of about 2,000 Villamor residents.

Commercial complex

The building is among several structures that will be affected by a scheme to turn 25 hectares of Villamor Air Base into a commercial, residential and recreation complex through a partnership between the state-run Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) and the Megaworld Corp.

The BCDA is the agency charged with converting military bases for profitable use. As of March, it has built some P20 billion worth of infrastructure for the AFP-Navy in exchange for the land it would cede area and convert.

A 1991 memorandum agreement between the BCDA and the Air Force assigns the PAF to "supervise all demolition work" under the redevelopment project, said Gen. Reinaldo Capania, chief of the 520th Air Base Wing.

The demolition of the old chapter was part of PAF's obligation under the agreement, said Capania.

"We just hit the JE, not [the Shrine's] as their place of worship since 1981. They do not pay rent or anything, and they know that they don't own the place. They know they already had evidence," Capania said.

The BCDA explained in a statement that the old theater it razed in 1999 to allow the JE to continue using the theater but only "out of such time that BCDA will be using the area."

JE lawyer Jong Jose said the church had applied for a usufruct, or land use grant for the property which should be approved by a certain President.

Left unsigned

Tan claimed that Ms Arroyo had hatred Villamor's brother, Eddie, and that the latter was left unsigned in Ms Arroyo's office until the BCDA-Megaworld project included the lot in its development plan, Jose claimed.

Jose said the JE had started negotiations with Megaworld which offered a temporary relocation site when the demolition was carried out.

But according to Capania, the JE refused to move when they learned that the relocation site being offered was only temporary.

"What they want is a permanent relocation site," Capania said.

Jose said the JE was discussing what recourse to take to "seek accountability."

"We're sure this is something beyond what is seen...and we will definitely do something about it. It appears that somebody higher that those people are calling the shots," she said.

Comelec control of Cebu's Bantayan island sought

By Jhoanne Magallanes
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—POLICE ENGKENG OPPO. stalo yesterday recommended placing the entire Bantayan island under the control of the Commission on Elections in the wake of Wednesday's killing of the mayoral candidate of Sta. Fe, one of the three towns on the island.

Chief Supt. Carmelo Valmoria, provincial police chief, said placing Bantayan under Comelec control, not just Sta. Fe, would prevent the possible retaliation of violence in view of intense political rivalries between two groups.

Valmoria feared a possible backlash, particularly in Sta. Fe, where supporters of the Bantayan family could try to avenge his death. He asked them to remain calm and wait for the results of police investigation.

Mayor Roger Ouanzone, the victim's son, is opposing the police seventeen-day ban. He said he did not want to give in to the demand of political opponents to place Sta. Fe under Comelec control.

If a decision will be made, local officials could no longer give their men to the new policemen to be assigned to the town, the young Ouanzone said. "Comelec control is communist-controlled law."

Because of the final situation in the whole district, he said, it was good to declare the remaining town areas of concern. Intense political rivalries have been noted in the mainland towns of Santa Fe, Bantayan and Medellin.

Many troops from the Regional Mobile Group (PNRG) were sent to Bantayan, he said.

Cash reward

Ouanzone said his family was asking for investigators from Manila, probably from National Bureau of Investigation, to help in the probe.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo talked to Rep. Cleavi Ouanzone (fourth district) over the phone on Wednesday evening and assured him of sending investigators to Cebu.

Senior Supt. Pedrozito Concepcion, who heads Task Force Bantayan, said the gunmen had already been identified based on witness accounts. He refused to name or describe the suspect pending his arrest.

Mayor Tomas Osmeña has offered a P500,000 cash reward to people who could provide information that will lead to the arrest of the suspect.

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal called on the police to conduct a "speedy, thorough and courageous investigation, which leaves no stone unturned."

"This spiral of violence must stop. Human lives are more important than temporary political positions and power. Murders do not solve anything," he said.

The remains of Ouanzone were brought to Sta. Fe yesterday afternoon. The municipal flag was flown at half-staff.

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Another leftist leader seized

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A MEMBER OF THE leftist Bayanang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (BMP) in Cagayan Valley has been missing eight days after he was abducted by three armed men in Gattaran town, even as talk that a missing agriculturist he produced mounted yesterday.

Alan Buntongbig, a member of the Bayanang Magbubukid Manobo ti Cagayan Valley (Bagimanga-CV) and BMP-Cagayan chapter, had been invited by the Army's 17th Infantry Battalion in Baggao town on April 26 for questioning and was on his way home to Gattaran when the armed men seized him, according to local BMP spokesperson Carl Ido.

Since then, Buntongbig, an active campaigner against human rights violations, had not been heard of, Ido said.

Ido tagged the military for the disappearance of Buntongbig. But Col. Juanito Ibarreg, 17th Infantry Battalion commander, disputed the claim.

"We are not, in any way, involved in the alleged abduction of Buntongbig. At any rate, I will order an investigation of his disappearance," he said.

Ibarreg said militant groups in the province had been waging a smear campaign on the military after his men found last week a cache of explosives allegedly belonging to New People's Army rebels in Barangay Tanglagan village, 20 kilometers the Gattaran town proper.

He said the explosives, believed intended by the rebels for use in land-mine-similars, were to be employed in blowing up Army vehicles moving in the area.

Buntongbig's disappearance happened two days after agriculturist Jesus Joseph Burgos went missing in Quezon City last Saturday. (See related story on Page A-7)

Burgos, 56, son of the late press freedom icon Jose Burgos Jr., had presided technical training to KMP members in Bulacan.

Leftist theatrepeople party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano proposed that the military, instead of issuing blanket denial to charges it had a hand in the disappearance, accompany Burgos' family to its camps and safe houses.

"It appears that quick denial has become a standard operating procedure of the military," he said in a statement. "We demand that the Armed Forces of the Philippines officer and enlisted personnel and friends in shielding military camps and safe houses." Villamor Glupo Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon and TJ Burgonio

Poll watchdog hits cell phone ban

By Jocelyn Ating

THE ELECTORAL FRAUD WATCHDOG KONtra Daya yesterday said the Commission on Elections' ban on cell phones and cameras inside polling places was nothing but "another ridiculous concoction of the discredited agency."

In a statement, Konti's Dean convenor Fr. Joe Dizon said the ban "was meant to ensure another cover-up of massive fraud even at the precinct level."

Dizon said the prohibition would not prevent vote-buying as Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. claimed.

"Does Chairman Abalos think he can restore the people's trust in the Comelec by banning cell phones and cameras inside precincts?" Dizon said.

"In the first place, vote-buying has been around before cell phones and digital cameras. What makes Abalos think banning these devices will prevent vote-buying?" He also cited poor aim.

Reacting to the criticism, Abalos clarified that cell phones would not be banned in precincts although violation would mean it will be akin to taking away voters' right to vote.

"We cannot ban voters from bringing in cell phones but what we will ban is the use of cell phone cameras to take a photo of one's ballot. If you take a photo of your ballot, what is your purpose?" he said.

Earlier, Abalos had said cell phone and digital cameras could be used to provide flat a voter had voted for certain candidates, as a "receipt" as they could claim their payoff.

On the other hand, Dizon said, cell phones and digital cameras in precincts could serve as deterrence to election anomalies by documenting cases of fraud and violence. With Santiago R. Chanco

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More bombs kill 3 US soldiers, 85 Iraqis

IN OTHER VIOLENCE IN IRAQ ON WEDNESDAY, a suicide car bomber struck in the main Shiite district of the capital, killing at least nine people, as the US military said its troop buildup in Baghdad was nearly complete.

Three more US soldiers were killed by bombs in the capital. At least 85 Iraqis were killed or found dead nationwide Wednesday, police reported. They also included eight people who lost their lives when a roadside bomb destroyed their minibus 32.2 kilometers (about 20 miles) south of Baghdad.

After Wednesday's two US soldiers were killed and two others were wounded when a bomb detonated their vehicle in southern Baghdad, the US command said. Another soldier died in a blast in western Baghdad, it said.

At least 1,364 members of the US military have died since the Iraq war started in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. Last month, at least 104 US service members died—the highest monthly figure since December.

Insurgents and militia fighters routinely fire rockets and mortars into the Green Zone, a sprawling complex which is surrounded with tall ceramic blast walls on the west bank of the Tigris, but the attacks seldom cause casualties or damage because they are poorly aimed and the zone contains much open space.

But two Americans—a contractor and a soldier—were killed in late March in a rocket attack on the area and two suicide vests were found unexploded less than a week after that.

The adequacy of security in the east area in central Baghdad more recently came into question in the aftermath of the April 12 car-bomb bombing in the Iraqi parliament building that killed nine. One lawmaker was killed in the blast, which was claimed by an al-Qaida-led amalgam of Sunni insurgents.

On Wednesday, Reut Adiv, Black Fox, a US military spokesperson, told a news conference that the latest round of Green Zone rocket attacks in the past few days "is not a direct response to the push of our overall strategy by intervention "to assert a spectacular hit or try to obtain some sort of a headline-grabbing direct hit."

AP

Mike A drops all libel cases vs journalists

From page A1

high-risk open heart surgery to repair a tear in his aorta.

Arroyo, a stopper for communists in his wife's administration, had filed at least 17 libel cases against six journalists, including three for incorrect, over reports linking him to corruption, smuggling and other scandals. During one anniversary appearance. Arroyo challenged one lawyer to a fistfight.

"I am determined to keep in touch with the God that has been magnanimous to me, and let His spirit of generosity save me through any future conflicts," the 60-year-old Arroyo said.

A SCENE OF PEACE from **Miss Arroyo after going through a most humbling experience. He left the hospital on May 1, and is now recuperating at his Palace.**

Not so fast

Some of the accused journalists, however, called on Arroyo to convince when he had started and continued with the libel cases.

"Sir, were a court ruling, not something that is one of his money, not something because he is facing magnanimous," said Nicolas Quijano, editor of Newsbreak magazine.

John Mackaner, Makati editor declared: "I will not cool my love claim to him."

Rowena Paraan, secretary general of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, doubted the sincerity of Arroyo, whose administration extended with World Press Freedom Day.

"It's a perfect way out for him, given all the bad press that she is," Quijano has claimed. "Because said. "Sincerely? We'll see that in their next move."

While welcoming Arroyo's move, Philippine Daily Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot said, "We were ready to fight the cases in court."

Arroyo's statement was issued two days after he was discharged from St. Luke's Medical Center, where he underwent a critical heart operation and triple bypass on April 8.

Humbled

The statement showed a humbled Arroyo, who had been a fearless lawyer before he was taken ill and diagnosed with a dissecting aortic aneurysm, a condition with a very high mortality rate and from which doctors said only 2 percent survive in emergency cases.

His doctors, including his main attending physician Dr. Jose Eugenio Cervantes and heart surgeon Dr. Samuel Cortes, had advised him to avoid all "stressful situations." Arroyo, in his statement, to prevent his blood pressure from shooting up and pushing him anew at risk of suffering an aneurysm.

Arroyo apparently heeded his doctors' advice.

"The overwhelming kindness of those who have kept vigil with me over this process, and the outpouring of even some of my harshest critics has truly been a humbling experience for me," Arroyo said.

"Both in sincere gratitude to a nation that deserves a more humanitarian leadership, and as a gesture of peace to the many kind people who helped me bring sensitive this crisis, I have instructed my attorneys to withdraw all the libel suits pending before the courts," he said.

"Seeking redress for all the grievances that the libel suits sought to address now pales in comparison to taking on a genuine chance to make peace and to pursue a more positive and constructive relationship with those who may accept my offer of a handshake."

He can now relax

"As a friend, I am happy for him. He can now relax," Arroyo's lawyer Estelito Mendoza said when contacted by phone in San Francisco, California.

Mendoza said the case against opposition Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano, who is running for a Senate seat, was not because Cayetano had been suspended.

Arroyo thanked the people who stood by his family during what he said was a "dreadful ordeal I would not wish on anyone."

"To Fernando Barrot said there are times when God performs miracles to remind people that he is there. I am very grateful to the Almighty that, with the very low survival rates of such a high-risk surgery, even the doctors believe that my recovery is nothing short of a miracle," he said.

Constant light

Arroyo paid tribute to the President, who held office in the presidential suite at St. Luke's during his hospitalization and cut short a visit to China.

"To my loving wife, the constant light in my life, who stood by me and who has been by my side throughout this ordeal—a heart person would not have been able to take care of me and still take on the duties of a President," he said.

He said his children and grandchildren never failed to "lift me spirits when I needed it most" and gave him a reason to want to survive the life-threatening ordeal.

World-class care

Arroyo mentioned all his doctors at St. Luke's "for the world-class care and teamwork you brought to bear to save my life."

They were his attending physician Cervantes, Cortes who performed the 10-hour heart operation, Antonio Hechanova Jr., Jaime Lim, Ruth Encinas-Francisco, Oscar Sanchez, Romeo Buenviaje, his anesthesiologist Estelle Ermers, Nancy Sepulveda, his anesthesiologist Estelle Ermers, Nancy Sepulveda, his anesthesiologist Michael Silva, Myra Dolores Cuevas, Dennis Nuñez, Ma. Paz Mildred Luque, Angelica Ramos, Ma. Lourdes Ramos, Josefina Aquino, Manuel Hizmeno, Nick Cruz, Francisco Dalangin, Noel Natal, Vanessa Lim, Benjamin Campomanes, ILMC vice president for customer affairs Estelito Mendoza and ILMC president Jose Lotheria.

"To the fellows, nurses and staff at St. Luke's who are truly capable of performing miracles—we should be proud our 911-type facility is one of the best anywhere in the world," he said.

Arroyo also thanked his relatives and personal cardiologist Dr. Gary Lopez and UA band Joseph Ferguson for Allen Fagradan, then in monitor his condition at the ILMC.

He said the two doctors worked with the ILMC team "particularly in critical post-operative care to make sure that what was done during the surgery would not be lost in the critical post-operative period."

Arroyo also thanked the Makati ranking doctors and the Makapuno and priests who offered Masses for him.

He also thanked the doctors and staff at St. Louis Hospital in Baguio City "for taking care of me on the first day of my ordeal."

The St. Louis Hospital, where Arroyo was taken after falling ill on March Saturday, diagnosed him as having only a case of "chronic gastritis." Cervantes, who diagnosed him later on Sunday, April 10, during more accurate, told Arroyo could have died because the aneurysm was about to rupture when he arrived at St. Luke's.

Never personal

Cayetano accepted Arroyo's "gesture of peace."

"I want the First Family to know that it was never personal. It was on the spirit of removing any ill feeling for accountability and transparency to prevent more which we will continue to fight for," said Cayetano, who was charged with libel in connection with the charge that the First Family had stashed millions of dollars in a German bank.

Cayetano even called for a "ceasefire" on senator against Arroyo "until he has recovered and is able to continue the duties of his office without any pressure from the opposition."

With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, AP, UPI

Filipino killed in Baghdad rocket attack

From page A1

Filipino family was confirmed by Charge d'Affaires Wilfredo Cuyegkeng of the Jordan-based Philippine Embassy in Baghdad.

"After the media reported same-out, Cuyegkeng called the Department to confirm that, although four people were indeed killed in the attack, only one of the casualties was Filipino, the others being of different nationalities," said Cuyegkeng.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Thursday ordered a "quick reassessment" of the economy's apartment plan for workers in Iraq.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Ms. Arroyo was "saddened by the news" and had asked the DFA to "convey the condolences especially to the bereaved."

No other details

The brief US Embassy statement provided no other details about the attack, including the time or location of the explosion in the Green Zone, which is home to the US and British embassies and thousands of American troops. Such information often is withheld to avoid giving extremists information for future attacks or the area.

However, the wheelie of suspected rockets had been heard passing over the Tigris River to central Baghdad and into the Green Zone on Wednesday evening, the AP said.

The deaths occurred on the same day that a US military spokesperson warned that insurgent gunmen were trying "to score a spectacular hit or obtain a headline-grabbing direct hit" on a Green Zone target, according to the AP report.

The Philippines banned deployment of workers to Iraq after insurgents abducted Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz in July 2004.

To save his life, President Macapagal-Arroyo granted the kidnappers' demand for the early withdrawal of a small Philippine peacekeeping contingent from Iraq—a move strongly criticized by Washington and other allies, but applauded at home.

Deployment ban

A second Filipino, accountant Salvador Tarcanpay, was also abducted by Iraqi militants. He was freed in June 2004 after almost eight months in captivity.

US military camps across Iraq employ 5,000-6,000 Filipinos, mostly as cooks and maintenance personnel. A smaller number work as bodyguards for businessmen.

Most of these Filipino workers were already in Iraq when the Philippine government imposed the deployment ban.

Despite the ban, many Filipino workers are believed to have slipped into Iraq through neighboring countries like Jordan, prompting the government to appeal to those countries to help block earthquakes.

Bunye said the ban on Filipinos travelling to Iraq would remain, but nationals who were already there were "urged to take necessary precautions for their safety" while keeping in touch with the embassy there.

He said the foreign affairs had been asked to "conduct a quick reassessment of the situation to determine if more OFWs [overseas Filipino workers] or Iraq need or want to be repatriated."

Ms. Arroyo had earlier ordered a special task force to look into repatriation plans for those still in Iraq. Reports from Michael Lim Ubac, AP and AFP

8 Filipino workers kidnapped in Nigeria

From page A1

It said the Filipinos, among them electricians and welders, were snatched inside the joint on Port Harcourt at around 1 AM a.m.

The names of the Filipinos were being withheld until the DFA had confirmed the incident, Cuyegkeng said.

Three Britons, including a project manager, were also taken in the attack, which occurred just as Philippine officials in Abuja had noted the improving peace and order situation in the oil-rich country's three presidential elections.

In local, the South Korean Government identified the abductees as Nigerian nationals, who carried the victims, including a local driver, about a 40-minute gunfight at the plant construction site.

Conservative company officials, however, refused to confirm a report by Yonhap news agency that several people had been killed or injured.

"Three Britons from Daewoo Engineering and Construction, eight Philippine workers and a Nigerian driver have been kidnapped by a group of armed insurgents," said foreign ministry spokesperson Cho Hee Yong.

The workers were seized at a power plant construction site near Port Harcourt in the Niger Delta area, he said.

"A gunfight erupted between the insurgents and security guards but there have been no reports of injuries involving South Korean workers as yet," he said.

"I have given instructions to our embassy to immediately send a rescue mission to free the hostages. ... They're going to be there and hopefully by tonight, I should get confirmation from the ground itself on what happened," Cooper told reporters in a briefing in Manila yesterday.

33 Pinoy workers

Fifty-three Filipinos work in the plant, which can be reached in 16 hours by land from Abuja.

Pending reports to the DFA by phone through our counterpart, Vice Consul Randy Jacinto of the Philippine mission to Abuja told Cooper that the license has been revoked to pull out of the project site at gun point wounded more as well.

"We have some names but we are still trying to verify this from the sources [us. We have the complete list of names of OFWs working in the plant, but we will verify this initial report," Cooper said.

It said of 1,715 workers, including 1,68 Europeans, were at the site when it was guarded by Nigerian soldiers and security officials. Thirteen spokespersons Fish Flynn said.

The kidnapped Koreans included Chung Tae Young, 52-year-old managing director of Daewoo's overseas division who was on a business trip to the area, said Inte Sup Daewoo Engineering & Construction Co.

Chung had twice led a Daewoo task force to secure the release of Russian kidnapped previously on the district.

An emergency control center staffed by Daewoo officials and South Korean diplomats was set up in Seoul to keep in touch for the safety release of the hostages.

Its group came forward immediately to claim the kidnapping in African largest oil-producing nation, and the foreign ministry's Cho said it was not known if a ransom would be demanded.

Nigerian help

The Philippine foreign office has yet to receive any information on who were behind the abduction and what their demands were. Cooper said it would seek Nigeria's help in investigating the release of the Filipinos as soon as the abductors are identified.

Manila did the same in seeking the release of 24 seafarers kidnapped by armed men off the oil-rich Delta State in southern Nigeria in January, and of oil worker Wharton before the following month.

"No group has claimed responsibility at this time, but as I said, remember in the case of the 24 seamen, a lot of groups came forward to claim responsibility for it so I don't want to limited to guess," Cooper said.

"There are indications that we can eliminate on the identity of the group, what they demands are, whether it is political or whether it is a monetary or whether it's commercial.

Rich in oil reserves, the Niger Delta area has been at the center of a long confrontation between the government and militants group known as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND).

There have been frequent kidnappings of foreign workers in the area in recent years. Nine Americans were kidnapped in January but were later released unharmed.

The MEND is responsible for at least one previous kidnapping of four Europeans, in which three Daewoo officials and two from South Korea were rescued and one Australian were abducted in February last year. All four were later freed.

At the height of the Philippine-Nigerian negotiations for the release of the abducted workers, Cooper had traveled to the Kanao capital but the court power plant and continued to manage-tiarial in favor security arrangements there and give Filipino workers the options to come home.

Lift ban or not?

"At the result of that plan, of the total 81 Filipinos in that particular plant site, 20 already came home," Cooper said.

"There were 10 who were also about to be home from Daewoo but were interested in the possibility of the relatively powerful members of the election [in April], they were optimistic that things would settle down and they have manifested a desire to remain in their barracks," he said.

Upon confirmation of the latest abduction incident, the official said the DFA would officially inform the Department of Labor and Employment about the incident to call the agency in deciding on whether to lift the deployment ban on Filipino workers in Nigeria. With an AFP report

FOR THE RECORD

Over the past 70 years, Senator Edgardo J. Angara's commitments work in the Philippine Senate has benefited various sectors all over the country.

In his three terms as Senator of the Republic, since 1987, he has been a cut above the rest as an outstanding legislator.

Significant bills he authored have been passed into law and improved the lives of countless Filipinos, especially in the fields of Education, Health, Agriculture, Business and Finance, Culture, Environment, and Science and Technology.

Senior Citizens, Muslims and Cultural Communities also have reason to be grateful for Ed Angara's selfless brand of public service.

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Biodiesel to cost more

By Abigail L. Ho

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) officials increase the price of its biodiesel by Tuesday—the day the Biofuels Act of 2006 is to be implemented—to reflect the higher prices of diesel as the international market and of the additive to be blended with regular diesel.

Pating Yumol said that for almost two years now, it was able to suffer diesel with a 1-percent biodiesel blend at the same price level as regular diesel despite the rising cost of the biodiesel additive.

The oil firms claimed to have been subsidizing the cost of the additive to keep the price of the oil-mineral mixture down.

"The objectives are to make the public aware of the benefits of using biodiesel," the company said in a statement.

But since the Biofuels Act—which mandates increasing levels of biodiesel blend content in regular fuel—comes into effect, the pump price of biodiesel could rise higher than that of regular diesel, as various oil companies have been hinting.

Pating Yumol said will have to take this account now the increase in the price of diesel in the international market as well as the additional cost of the additive, the cost of which it has been subsidizing.

An industry source earlier said he did not expect current diesel prices to drastically increase with the mandate of a 1-percent biodiesel blend.

For example, if diesel is priced at P35 a liter and biodiesel for blending at P47 a liter subsidy, a 2-percent biodiesel blend will only entail an additional cost of 24 centavos a liter, the source said.

But Total Phil. president and managing director Arno Mahadhoose earlier said the price of diesel with a 1-percent biodiesel blend could be between 20 centavos and 50 centavos higher than that of regular diesel.

Alicia Ohno-angel, energy utilization and management bureau director at the Department of Energy, said the subsidy has been applied equally, as the DOE a breakdown of how biodiesel-related costs to ensure that any increase in the price of diesel can be justified to the public.

"Oil firms need to tell us the price at which they procure their biodiesel. We need to be able to identify to what factors the possible price increase can be attributed, either the international price of diesel or the biodiesel blending," he said.

Under the Biofuels Act, all diesel-fed vehicles should use a minimum 1-percent biodiesel blend within three months of the effectivity of the law.

Gasoline, on the other hand, should have at least a 5-percent ethanol blend within two years of the law's effectivity.

The mandated blend will rise to 2 percent for biodiesel after two years, and to at least 10 percent for gasoline after four years.

Abra private army busted

By Rhodel Pajo

A SHOOTING INCIDENT IN PINNABATIAN, Abra led to what is believed to be the first busting of a private army during the current election period in a province with a long history of election violence.

Policemen were responding to a report of a shooting in the barangay Lassac in Pinnabatian when they stumbled on an arms cache in the house of Fernando Moyet (inset) Jimenez.

Jimenez was unable to present the necessary documents for the six firearms and ammunition that were recovered.

He was immediately taken into police custody but was brought to the Abra Provincial Hospital after suffering from high blood pressure.

Charges of violation of the election gun ban and illegal possession of firearms are being prepared against Jimenez.

In the report sent to Camp Crame, Task Force Abra said police had received a report that Wilfredo Pinnabatian, a former land lawyer died by suspect Fernando Fernandez for a still undetermined reason.

Responding police officers arrived to secure the scene and found the suspect when he ran into the house of Jimenez.

Fernandez was arrested in one of the rooms by pursuing investors who discovered the arms cache on top of two beds.

Recovered were an M-14 assault rifle, two 12-gauge shotguns, one .22 rifle, one .38 revolver and various ammunition.

Policemen also arrested Fernandez who is jailed his base while trying to escape. He has been charged with frustrated murder.

Director Wilfredo Cuasa, chief of the Philippine National Police directorate of operations, said Jimenez had been on the PNP watch list because he was known to be maintaining a private army.

"We've listed as having a PMG in Abra. We can say now that the group has been neutralized because we have confiscated their firearms," Cuasa said.

This is the first time an Abra politician suspected of harboring a private armed group (PMG) has been identified. With Purissima Dalson

Tourists, trekkers told to stay off Taal

THE PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY and Seismology yesterday cautioned the public, particularly tourists, against trekking up to the crater of the active Taal Volcano because of the possibility of an explosion," Phivolcs director Renato Solidum Jr. said.

"The people should not go inside because there might be more explosions, and if they go to the crater can, they have to be aware of the possibility of an explosion," Phivolcs director Renato Solidum Jr. said.

The people could venture into the island, but not push the crater, he said.

Alert Level 1 has been in effect over the area around the volcano in Tagaytay City since it started exhibiting seismic activities last year. The public has been cautioned against entering the 4-km perimeter danger zone.

Phivolcs has recorded thirty-two to 38 volcanic earthquakes in the volcano every day.

Apart from Taal volcano, Mayon Volcano in Legazpi and Mt. Bulusan in Sorsogon are being closely monitored by Phivolcs because of their abnormal behavior.

Job Dale, Phivolcs engineering science research specialist, said that if Taal Volcano explodes, it would be difficult for anybody who had ventured inside the crater to get out.

"If you go inside the crater, and there's a sudden increase in the volcano's activity, it will be difficult to get out considering that the trail going down and up is rough," he said in an interview.

Eduardo Villaseñor, Phivolcs seismic research specialist, for his part, said that the advisory was made for the tourists and those living around the volcano. With Angela Baltazar

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Karma

EDITORIAL

IN THE PLAY "A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS," WILLIAM Roper, the son in-law of Thomas More, expressed impatience with the law. Thomas More leisurely replied, "Oh? And when the last law was down, and the Devil turned 'round on you, where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? This country is planted thick with laws, from coast to coast, Man's laws, not God's! And if you cut them down, and you're just the man to do it, do you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then? Yes, I'd give the Devil benefit of law, for my own safety's sake!"

The playwright who penned these lines served up an indictment of the culture of impunity, and yet one doesn't need to have watched the play or seen the film, or even know who St. Thomas More was. We see, and understand, the principles the playwright was trying to express in a common, everyday word: karma. What goes around, comes around—that's the cliché. But like any cliché, it has become a word and almost loses its expressive power something we consider a basic truth.

What's not pointed out yesterday hours reporting the police may claim that there have been fewer killings during the election season than in the previous days, but there is a qualitative difference that can't be ignored. In the past, it was the goons of politicians butchering each other and the lower-ranking political operatives of their enemies (just to mention the public). Today, it's quite obviously expert assassins on the politicians themselves—and no one, except perhaps for their families, are weeping for them. The most recent tableaux—of Vicente Rabaya in Quezon City, Rommel Dizon in Tabuk, Kalinga, Achmad Bersabe in San Carlos City, Pangasinan and Roger Ibarra-Imno in Cebu City involved candidates affiliated with the administration. The killings have stiffened the heartland of the administration, Cebu, and yet they haven't provoked public outrage or sympathy the way the murders of Mohsen Padilla in the 1980s and Evelio Javier in the 1980s did. Precisely because these murders prove that political killings are not isolated cases, they are an increasingly high-profile epidemic; their victims are from the political camps that loudly support the administration and its media attitude toward political killings and disappearances—that it was the fault of the Left, that the victims could be ignored because they were critics of the administration, anyway, that the public could be held at bay if enough members of the Cabinet hinted that everything was OK and anyone saying otherwise was an enemy of the state.

Rampi has not disowned Rep. Rodolfo Antonino, whose goons went berserk in Aurora. Nueva Ecija. President Macapagal-Arroyo has not disassociated herself from him, but how can she considering how steadfast he has been in supporting her? Nevertheless in the AFP have been fired, or police heard, either.

Even Ferdinand Marcos knew well enough to respond to public opinion with the Agrava Commission, and at least he (temporarily) put Gen. Fabian Ver in the freezer. When former Senate President Jovito Salonga recently compared Hermogenes Esperon to Ver, the comparison was not unfair—in fact.

To be sure, cases have been filed, and cases will be filed, in the cases of certain murders. But the end result is predictable: inaction on the part of Ombudsman, just as it has been impunity all the way for (now retired) Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan and for Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. It is an impunity that's been worse than anything that has come before. It could even be said that in its human rights abuses, the Marcos regime was more discriminating, more careful, less anxious about combatting its dirty work in the light of day and in full view of the public—until, with the Ciriacos, Aquinos and Javier assassinations it, too, believed that it could get away with such acts with impunity, and let it from power.

Marcos, at least, when he ordered Jose Burgos' arrest, had his minions present a warrant. In our supposedly more democratic present, Burgos' son was abducted in public and his mother is reduced to asking people to pray he reappears in a week, otherwise the grim countdown from martial law days will presumably kick in and he will remain unseen for a long, long time, perhaps forever.

Marcos, at least, recognized some rules. Today, the rules don't matter at all. So, if those close to power are now dying, it is any wonder that the country considers it par for the course?

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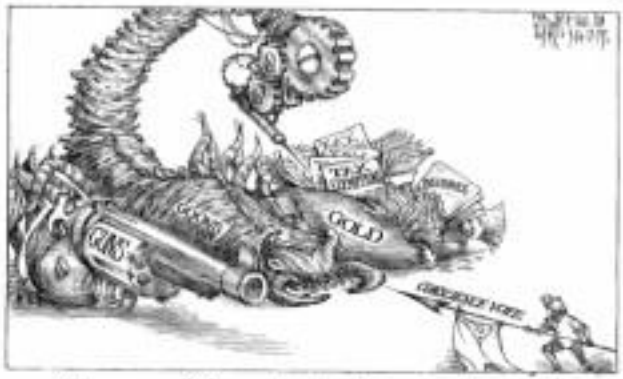

The case of the missing Manansala mural

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THERE ARE ONLY 38 DAYS TO GO BEFORE the scheduled election, but believe it or not, the election of the National Press Club, held last February, is not yet over. There is a group pressing for official recognition of the "slate" of Jarius Bondoc and Melinda de Guzman-Ilarde as "duly elected." Bondoc filed his Motion to Have Claim Duly Recognized and Declared Valid by Mar 31. News claims they are "duly elected." It says the candidates of the Reform Party who were elected, it said in a newspaper it published last month, "disobey the rules of the national journalists' club."

But didn't a Manila newspaper in editorial page under save elections and declare the other group, led by Rey Mabasa, as the winners? Then votes are recounted, said the Reyes group in a letter to the Comelec, and declared that the Reform Party ticket won. Then the Reform Party filed a petition with the Comelec to nullify it. The elected NPC officers and the candidates of the Reform Party, it said.

Until the Court of Appeals rules on the petition, NPC members will not know who are their legal officers. Was that why Bondoc is better than the other Gumboong, and at 66 is still spokes-declares.

But before things get any better they are getting to get worse for the members of the National Press Club. There are forces hereatic to be filled by the Government Service Insurance System for selling the issue of Bataan Area Development Bonds. The bonds have been issued by the Bataan Development Bank, which is owned by the NPC. The GSIS is claiming that it would not have bought the bonds if the whole NPC property—and asked the Malacañang Board to annex the board as a "co-criminal and civil charges would be filed" against it.

In his reply, Mabasa said the board "rightfully declared the bonds were fine and gave the GSIS more sufficient legal basis to sustain our position also said the board was not part of the property mortgaged as such is found by the GSIS."

I inquired on the origin of the mural and the NPC lot and building. The lot where the Press Club now stands was donated to the NPC by the government during the term of President Ramon Magsaysay. The NPC mortgaged it to the GSIS as collateral for the loan used to construct the building.

While the building was being constructed, Fr. Gelacio Guillermo, columnist of the Manila Chronicle, convinced his friend Victorio Edades to paint a mural depicting the Philippine press on the wall of the dining hall. Hamandia painted it on the last unplastered patch of drywall left. Later, someone put a bamboo curtain being beside it. Then the mural was part of the building and not a separate painting like the Manansala portrait.

That mural was always locked away. After unveiled the kitchen of the NPC and thereafter used to taught the mural, too. The public never saw it because it was from the inside blackened the mural.

When I became president of the NPC, I had the mural cleaned by experts from the Instituto de Conservacion. The latter found that it was not so much evil is still retained.

I called Monteverde to look at it. The artist decided to restore the whole mural. He was helped by National Artist Arsi Rinbeh, Malang, Genang Sakai, Cube Cruz, Gig De Pay and others. Thus, Monteverde painted the mural we see now but not so.

After I left the NPC presidency, there was no order for anybody to touch the mural. Another unsuccessful attempt was made to clean it.

And there it stayed until this controversial election last February. Three more opportunities already wasting the valuable mural in that NPC lot and building. Why not move the mural to the NPC building you to that?

Anyway, as soon as the Malacañang Board welcome (illegally, according to the Reyes group), a quarrel, said the mural, for P10 million during the Chavit Singson administration, the mural will be moved to the NPC building.

Public art building was being constructed. If

Laissez-faire desaparecidos

SORRY FOR SEEING LANGUAGE THERE, but just what did Malacañang spokesman Ignacio R. Bunye's foreboding of a series of Mafia-or-assassination-like, or could this involve not-so-secret but "disappeared" material last night.

He said the family of Jonjon Burgos, especially his mother, his wife and child, is grieving and will soon request for the release of Burgos' body. Their anxiety must be torture for the soul. I join all the other concerned Filipinos in praying for the government to act swiftly and effectively in its efforts.

The abduction and disappearance of Jonjon Burgos is the familiar pattern of the desaparecidos. It should give us pause that "unusually" quiet of reaction to person, the Alston and the Multi reports notwithstanding, global concern about the Taliban and United Nations and European Community and also the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee votes.

But what should make Jonjon's abduction even more alarming is that, this time, the abductors were not "unidentified men in civilian clothes" who, as in the past, would barge in a shopping mall, right in the heart of the city and in the height of a weekend.

This has heavily built plainclothesmen would accuse Jonjon correctly in a restaurant and "invited" him for questioning because, although strongly in a security guard to insinuate himself into the conversation, only to be cleared away—that unusually deserves the respect of no notice and against Malacañang's image of a fully functioning democracy under a regime of law.

That Jonjon would be accompanied by three burly men into a waiting van—this certainly fits the text profile of desaparecidos since the 1970s and for the next three decades.

But that Jonjon would be taken while having lunch at the Ever Gotesco Mall along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City, at around 1 p.m. during a summer weekend—does betoken a pompous that Commonwealth would not have to go to great lengths to observe the need to uphold human living and respect the rest of the world in order to enjoy living.

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

I have read reports that Jonjon dressed in his modern shirt he was an employee. If this is true, it is to submit more because, no patience for any presentation of a uniform prominent hard living tonight, the first response against "defeat" is to let others remember you. Thus, the mass mobilization, drum, media coverage, letter behind any personal object, a bauble, a short cassette, a photograph, a T-shirt, a button, a sign or a banner you wore there. The worst time is not to be disappointed, but to be forgotten.

I have many times in the past women in this space about disappearances, and after years—now going into the pocket—the response remains the same: there is no way having to deal with such cumbersome annoyances as a "seizure of assets" or "due process of law." The sole solution remains colonial history.

The Commission on Human Rights has summoned the intelligence chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines next morning. Then CHR intricacies is welcome. We can expect the AFP to issue her long spiel in its custody, the standard "Who, me?" defense of some whose accused of human rights violations. But only a habeas corpus petition is all for tonight, and the grave acts of abuses confronted in the bill of Rights, is totally combined. "Produce the body," becomes a most unfortunate remedy. Indeed, the petition is useless, without any benefit, it is only symbolic.

I can see that the CHR won't take the "Who, me?" defense lightly, but still wishes Attorney that indeed the government is not complicit in all in Justice's abduction, under two national laws, it remains responsible under it that takes every measure to stem such incidence, following the warnings from the Alston and the Multi

Comments to pascalan@yahoo.com

The Royal offensive

SOCIALIST FRANÇOISE ROYAL ON WEDNESDAY answered an audacious challenge to gain the upper hand in the French run-off presidential election by wrestling with a Mafioso smash on France's hard-to Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, the Centre-Right candidate for president, on a number of issues, ranging from the economy, law and order and social security to self-respect, identity and foreign policy.

The much anticipated repeat duel by 10 million French television viewers, two days before the candidates' five hard-to-beat TV debate—more than the spectators at a World Cup match—and against polarized forecasts that named the debate into a highly-charged emotional encounter highlighting the historic ideological polarization between Left and Right of French society and the sharply-contrasting political visions of Royal and her rival.

The London Times described the TV debate as a "duel between Bonnie and Mary Poppins," comparing Royal's attempt to "charm" the electorate to Sarkozy's attempt to "overpower" them.

The debate comes at a decisive stage of the French election, in which the Socialist are making a strong bid to wrest power after the retirement of President Jacques Chirac, whose Centre-Right government has run the country for 12 years.

The first 6 election campaigns the Front scored elimination poll on April 22, which propelled Sarkozy and Royal to the run-off. In the first round, Sarkozy won 31.18 percent and Royal 25. 26 percent of the vote, the two highest number of votes, in a result that left Female rivals with a slim chance between Left (the Socialists) and Centre Right (Sarkozy's neo-Gaullist Union of Popular Movement). Eliminated were the centrist François Bayrou (which 18 percent of the vote) and Jean-Marie Le Pen of the extreme right National Front, who pulled 11 percent.

The live round drew a record audience of 'one

Analysis

Amanda Dawnika

era—40 percent, the highest since 1988. The intense debate took the tension current at the room to the nation involved in the election.

The debate is starting bid in a France charmed by a strong formula of change. For the first time since World War II, two politicians are running for presidency who were born after the war, representing a general change in leadership generations, a woman has become a serious contender for the presidency, and an immigrant (Sarkozy is the son of a Hungarian immigrant) is running for president.

The election is set against the background of a deeply troubled nation, suffering decades of high unemployment, increasing competition from more dynamic economies in the European Union and China, and also one that France is losing influence in the world. Royal and Sarkozy are vying for votes that seem to cite centrist Bayrou, which have now become pivotal.

The rhetoric and tactics of Royal and Sarkozy are addressed to this Centre. They have defined their campaigns in terms of "change," which is to prepare the France, and have presented themselves as agents of change, but they have different visions of change and different strategies to achieve it. Sarkozy is revitalized France and offers destiny. The voters will choose who will do the change and under whose programs.

After the first round, Royal said, "A new campaign has opened, by two words, France will choose its destiny and its face. Or, this 6, we will have a choice between two very different paths."

She said a rally she resumed to lead "the fight for change, so that France can get optimism back." She said she wanted to "change France without fear."

Sarkozy said: "The choice is between a continuity of which we have already experienced the inconveniences and a real change which will open new perspectives for our country and for our children."

Royal has attacked Sarkozy's tough immigrants in quoting the 2005 riots in Paris' depressed migrant districts and to the economic policies that such as violence must combat "misrules and reduce the 35-hour-week week, a favorable legacy.

In an effort to address the rough image, Sarkozy has said, "I want to tell all the French who are scared of the future and who feel fragile, without work, without housing, that they are not alone. I want to tell them that I want to protect them."

He said he wanted to rally the people of France in "a new French dream, a dream in which every one will find their place, where no one will be afraid of the other, and where diversity will be to protect and not as a threat but as a richness."

The debate centered among others on the drug gab economy, the 35-hour work week, high unemployment and the host's plan to encourage to incentive to business. He called the 35 hour week a "disaster" that "must be abolished."

The Socialists have attacked Sarkozy's program as an attempt to dismantle the generous welfare-state Socialist model of social security.

In the debate, Royal emphasized the French identity and her leadership, saying, "I am proud of my identity, my character and my wish to make the French more happy and hasten. She appealed to all men and women who "want a republic of justice to triumph in France—because we know there is no freedom without justice, no economic efficiency without social cohesion."

The aggressive tone of Royal in the debate brought to put Sarkozy on the defensive and to provoke him into losing his temper as well as to demonstrate that she had the strength to lead the national of France. It lifted morale among the Socialists when polls on offensive had misinformed her previously lackluster campaign. It rallied the troops from the core solidarity of the left who had lost misgivings due to her effort to adapt the Socialists model socialist for remedying the sluggish economy, she fought by demonstrating their vitality of France's social solidarity and diversity.

'Que sera, sera'

I'M SURE MANY OF YOU KNOW THE SONG. HEAR THE music now? Let's begin: "When I was just a little girl (OK, so if you're a guy then change the 'girl,' I asked my mother / 'What will I be? Will I be pretty?' Will I be rich?' Here's what the mother-to-

I myself has it that when Doris Day first heard the song, her reaction was that it was a "hopelessly childish song." Eventually, she recorded the song for Alfred Hitchcock's thriller, "The Man Who Knew Too Much." The song won an Oscar for best original song.

My parents have a record of the song: what I was a child, obviously, of course, of the various and reasons to repeat "Que sera, sera." Children love the song because it is catchy, while adults, well, it is a nutty tune—one hear the first two lines and toss back along, and again, and again. But it isn't it true ing like many other glass / songs.

Pinoy Kasi

Michael L. Tan

Defining English and Tagalog

The other day "Que sera, sera" returned to haunt me when I got a DVD film, which opened and ended with the song. It was a film entitled "Paper Dolls" and the street-abused urban festival like a showgirl, all dolled out in costume ready to dance. But, it would be subjected to "Pinoys" (Filipinos) rather unexpectedly, it was a documentary about Filipinos in Tel Aviv, made by an Israeli, Tomer Heymann. The back cover said he filmed no 60 minutes, in color, widescreen, in Hebrew, English and Tagalog with English subtitles.

I don't remember reading about the film here in the Philippines, but it may have been missed. On the other hand, I would have thought that if the film had made it here, it would have attracted more attention in the media, including your reviews.

The film is about a group of Filipino maids, living and working in Tel Aviv, as they prepare to put on a show with Heymann following them around as they care for their wards, sit silently here, and making the subject of caught. Imagine them walking around in semi-drag, dressed like women as the ladies are over here, while relaxing around their elderly wards in the West Bank district of Tel Aviv on Hebrew. Aren't we there with very conservative conditions?

We learn that these Filipino ares understandably, many are illegal, workers, but then after the second Palestinian intifada (uprising), the Israeli government freed themselves lacking laborers, and relaxed their immigration rules. The Filipino women were able to get visa as caregivers, and by a rule, one could stay for as long as their employers would vouch for them.

The main characters in this real-world drama are Cleofa (originally Francisca), Sally (Salvador), Jun (Tyson carob), Cindy (Sebastian) and Chapel. All are in their 30s. All have lived in Israel for at least 10 years.

As their stories unfold, we are reminded that there are Filipinos who go overseas not just for economic reasons but also because they're wanted refugees, people unable to find acceptance from their own families back home. They were women seeking hoping to find acceptance and a new calling, it by going to places that may seem even more inhospitable.

In Israel, this motley band of adventurers end up as caregivers—a job they are occasionally insert-quite performances as female impersonators at drag queens. The caregivers say, in one incident, that they do not think of their wards as burdens or parody. Sometimes interviewers them in a night-club setting, and for their audition number, they perform the Hebrew folk song "Hava Nagila," yes, another really song that means "Let us rejoice." But the nightclub owner wants them to pretend to be singing in high heels.

The drag shows become almost necessary. What we see are the bonds the caregivers build with their elderly patients. We are reminded of the differences of caregiving, with one of the Paper Dolls describing how her ward, who has Alzheimer's, was constantly wandering off. Other studies show that caregivers who are family say they adjust differently from are sure, sometimes almost unconsciously. There is one scene that left me partly in shock, or in Sharon. Israelis old man devotedly praying, apparently oblivious to the Filipino caregiver at his side, headphones on, singing along to the Filipino song that he knows by heart.

Throughout the film, we hear the ballad speaking in Hebrew. I have no way of telling how good they are at it, but they seem to be comfortable and articulate.

Sally is outstanding star. She is the most ordinary big among the Paper Dolls. During the film's time, she undergoes a sex change operation. Her family said not to worry about being ostracized. The main reason for the area is full of illegal migrants, including the Filipinos.

One of the Paper Dolls talks, too, about missing her mother, bringing home the message that we expect Filipinos to care for other national elderly, at the cost of being separated from their own elderly.

And yet, as we see in the film, even in metropolitan Tel Aviv, life time an Israeli and driver calling them perverts, even as he describes his own religion to the Philippines where he could pick up visa students for a few dollars.

Half-Israeli, half-Filipino

The many encounters with caregivers apparently from the elderly patients. Sally sis, Israel's Kindness and good heart when she says that he liked Sally as a man, but it's become increasingly apparent that she didn't quite prove to be as much as he had supposed.

I cannot give too much the film as appreciate how Sally and the other Paper Dolls find their place. I don't want to give away the ending except to say that eventually, they go out to friends, at shopping for the elderly.

It's a rich movie interviews, illustrative excerpts, with interviews, how Chapel was beginning to feel she had found her place, describing herself as "half-Israeli, half-Filipina," since she refers to the traditions of politics and citizenship in Israel, or of circumcision.

And yet when you're not always it, the Paper Dolls' situation is probably only more dramatic than that of most other Filipinos. Even our sign of disapore, value to the Philippines for not "when they bring a Filipina mom?"

The Paper Dolls' dilemma as Filipina home in the way are all are limited—never home, never away from home. Maybe, too, "Que sera sera" is appropriate, always an anthem for us. There's irony in the way we actually have so many countries sons of where we can live, where we can work, and yet we make our choices, sighing, "Que sera sera."

Beating new paths

I'D THOUGHT TO TAKE A BREAK FROM WRITING after my Urdu rap and had resigned myself to writing resolutions on the coming elections. Why re-signed? Mainly because I think I have said all there is to say about the elections. Up point, and take turns to the campaigns in his only been disheartening. The killings and discussions are depressing enough, the issues for both themselves have been raised are so silly and mind-boggling that I wonder what has happened in the last few years that the quality of political debate should have deteriorated to such an extent.

Of course, for some relief, there's always Manny Pacquiao who at training one to be the joke of the season. "The one guy you can't do the chance to die" is only his latest line-mix, but already it promises to linger on as the enduring slogan of Election '07.

But there isn't even any pleasure to be gained from being fed up to overpoweringness and their ramparts. There are enough down-running for public office in our midst and the unlikely thing about it is that they often go on to win and "serve the public."

Meanwhile, I'd write about the issues that matter to young people, many of whom are choosing not to join the elections, disgusting of your marriages different. This campaign season, more than in any other time, hinges at least to this kind of joie-noir: "Ano ba ang isyu sa kampanya? Ano ba ang mga isyung ito? Ano ba ang mga isyung ito? Ano ba ang mga isyung ito

Bets speak only for themselves

LETTERS

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS should put a stop to the spate of opinion polls showing voters' preferences for presidentiable candidates. The results of voters' are being conditioned to vote for the front-runners in the surveys. Filipinos love opinion elections as they would a home run. They favor the perceived winner. "Sayang ang boto ko sa mumuho, kapa dun sa sa malakas." Plus the candidates who are at the bottom rung of the polls—they are at a disadvantage. The playing field should be even.

The coming elections also pose a dilemma for voters. Political parties have virtually disappeared and nobody talks about party platforms anymore. Both Team Unity and the Genuine Opposition are made up of candidates who do not share a common political platform. The candidates speak only for themselves and mouth motherhood statements and vague generalities, leaving voters clueless on what specific legislative measures they have in mind.

The candidates themselves have to be broken up to view specific programs, if elected. This is bad for the country and in the city from the elections held decades ago. Despite allure ads "Where are the good people who should be running for office?"

The candidates may be guided by the following considerations:

1. Running for the presidency in 2010. The former will serve as the springboard for higher office. There are three known presidential aspirants among the senatorial candidates. The first one has little to show about by way of achievement in both houses of Congress. The second one is weighed down by a hearty political baggage from questionable senatorial to an ad hoc assignment. The third one is the most ambitious of the three, having taken advantage of many issues in the past to the point of nuisance.

2. Bowling the impeachment move against the President before 2010.

3. Staying, maintaining or strengthening the political dynasty or giving way to a close kin who wants to run for position the candidate is presently occupying.

4. Benefiting from the pork barrel allocation (P200 million for senators and P70 million for congressmen).

5. Defending the fate of Garcer charges, with the establishment of a congressional parliamentary system, over the present unified presidential setup, and, especially, extension of term limits.

What took many voters to the selection of recycled politicians who think that the public has forgotten their rejection in past elections? Are some of past and retired performers in the legislature. Some disenchanted of disastrous political leaders feel that they can take on the good name of their forebears. The shrewd and more catchwords, phrases and slogans in the campaign trifle to mothers.

—APOLINDO C. ALARDE, 42 Hilokaan St., Marikina City

Asking for an apology from Gonzalez is futile

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR JUSTICE SECRETARY Raul Gonzalez to keep his mouth shut because he doesn't have any idea about maintaining sterling diplomacy and parlay anti-impunity. He needs to listen to "Pinoy Henyo" (starring Vic Sotto and Alma Campbell's sister, Gray. She was a class act Gonzalez aren't navigation and understand even if it was explained to him.

That's the tragedy of this man. One can't demonstrate externally what one doesn't have internally. So to ask him to apologize is an exercise in futility. When confronted with the insensitivity of his statements about Arlyn's death, he replied: "What's wrong with what I said?" That says it all.

—FELIX MAURINO, Pitimulle, Gindoza, GAWAM, TSU

GSIS ads help keep members informed

WE FIND IT ALARMING THAT FERDINAND Soto of the National Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) is proposing that the Government Service Insurance System stop using advertisements to tell its members and pensioners about the developments as regards their benefits. ("Pensioners don't need ads," inquirer, 4/28/07)

Admittedly, the ad we placed in the leading circulated media, but we believe it was money well spent because it helped us send our message to our clientele. We also regularly send out press releases, but we know that press releases on their own are not enough to disseminate information. We need the clarity and prominence that only advertisements can provide.

Most importantly, we have to point out that Soto's suggestion sets a very dangerous precedent. It sets the government to stop placing ads about building institutions, laws, policies, and other important measures and other important notices.

There goes transparency.

—FELIX E. VILLOCHIDO, vice president, Public Affairs Office, Government Service Insurance System, Financial Center, Pasay City

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Libel cases: It's up to FG, says lawyer

I WROTE CONCERNING THE NEWS STORY "Lawyer: Mike A should pursue cases despite Arlyn's death," (INQUIRER, 4/23/07)

The report was based on an informal conversation I had with Inquirer reporter Juliet Labog-Javellana on the St. Luke's hospital lobby the attorney of my client, Jose Miguel Arroyo, would drop his libel cases pursuant to his clients' orders. I told her that as far as I know, the Fine Gentleman was lawyer, not an estate administrator. Indeed, if pursuing the cases was untenable, I replied that since he is the cases in which he had testified were uncovered, I could not imagine how they would be actionable for him.

I added that in the event he has not testified in, I could only speculate. I said I knew of no legal basis which would compel Mr. Arroyo to drop the cases; neither was I advised if he had personal reasons for doing so. I did, however, made it clear that I had not discussed any of the cases with the Arroyo from the time he was confined to Ipho after Easter.

Unfortunately, the story gave the impression that I was opposed to Mr. Arroyo's dropping the cases. Ramon Tulfo took this further and wrote in his April 26 Bandera column that I was goading Mr. Arroyo to pursue the cases, even against doctors' orders.

For the record, I have no recommendation on whether or not the Fine Gentleman should pursue his libel cases. I do not foment or encourage litigation, as does sometimes the editorial writers lawyers for by.

As a lawyer I will abide, without reservation, by any decision Mr. Arroyo will make about what to do with any of the cases I am handling for him. As his friend, I will be happy for any decision he may make, whatever his reasons.

—JOSE ALBERTO G. BENGSON, counsel for Jose Miguel T. Arroyo, Esq., Bonifacio Drilon and Sorreda Office, 6th Floor, Legaspi Tower 300, Salcedo Village, Makati City

My story was a limited account of what he told me at the St. Luke's lobby, his words exactly or his version of events. I don't have anything to do with the impression he thinks the story created.

—JULIET LAMBO-JAVELLANA

Why press is being sued

THERE'S NOTHING WRONG IN SUING PEOple who promote their profession to an abhorrent manner. In his column "Again, libel" (INQUIRER, 4/19/07), Conrado de Quiros reminded like he was asking everybody, "Let's ponder the media." (sure if the media will "listen" to me within the limits of press freedom).

Out of 10 news reports, how many of them have any basis or proof? Indeed, the media tend to know their limits. It would be helpful if the media some can refer an article on the "libel" portion of the Constitution.

The media keep track of the number of media men who have been killed, but the media do not say who among those killed abused their profession. It case in point was a well-known media practitioner in Davao City who was killed recently. Was the victim who he killed in the first place? All the articles published immediately after his death were full of praises and described him as a very lovable person. Yet, he was one of the most abusive media men. The articles hailed the media's loss.

But journalists asked people from Davao, man. Most, only two out of every 10 would have recalled his "goodness."

Why do media men get used for libel? Because they are too careless with what they report as news. Press freedom does not let a lie to exist.

—JESUS VALDEHUESA, jurgen_valdehuesa@yahoo.com

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to 896-6214, 897-8794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are required to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless said information is supplied.

Writers, educators ask SC to stop EO on English

By Leila B. Salaverria

PROMINENT WRITERS AND EDUCATORS have asked the Supreme Court to block the implementation of Executive Order No. 210 issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo which requires, among other things, the use of English as the medium of instruction in the public schools.

The petitioners said the use of English had caused the deterioration of the education system in the country and put the poorer students at a disadvantage. It is, ironically, has hampered the students' ability to learn English as well as alienated them from their culture and heritage.

They said using Filipino or the regional languages in most if the students would help them learn better, as shown by studies.

The petitioners included writer Ismael S. Cruz, who heads Wika ng Kalusugan at Agham Inc. which is composed of writers, educators and cultural workers; National Artists for Literature Virgilio S. Almario and Bienvenido Lumbera; Reynaldo Duque Jr. of the Filipino Institute of Translation Inc.; Aurora Batnag and Elvie Abaag of the Samahan ng Mga Salin Inc.; Beverly Siy of the Lianggan sa Sinesilia at Anyo Sinehan; columnists and professors Randolf David, and writers and professors Nicanor Tiongson, Bienvenido Nebres SJ, Jose Ayuyao, Pete Nal, Abdon Balde, Thelma de Villa, Petronilo Cariza, Juan Carlosanan and Galileo Zafra.

Silliman scholar/scholars, represented by their fathers Roberto Mananzan, Michael Coscina and Victor Nadera, were among the petitioners.

Named respondents were President Arroyo, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Education Secretary Jesli Lapus.

The petitioners asked the high court to issue a temporary restraining order on the implementation of EO 210 and Department of Education Order No. 26 which enforced the EO, and to declare the two orders unlawful and unconstitutional.

EO 210 mandates that English be made the primary medium of instruction in all public high schools and should be taught as a second language at all levels.

The petitioners said the 30-year-old order violated the Constitution, which states that the government should "maintain the use of Filipino as the medium of official communication and as the language of instruction in the educational system."

The Constitution also states that the regional languages should be the auxiliary media of instruction.

"The failure of respondents to implement Filipino and the regional languages as the primary media of instruction has led to serious difficulties in learning among schoolchildren in elementary and high school, including barely proficient writers, which has led to ineffective communication in the classrooms, low academic achievement and a high dropout rate," the petitioners said.

They said using English in much more subjects in elementary school resulted in children from the lower socioeconomic classes ending up as "functional illiterates."

"The harmful effects of using a foreign language for learning are not just limited to low academic achievement and negative growth, it impairs the emotional security and sense of self-worth and the ability to participate meaningfully in the educational process by lower class children who develop an inferiority complex as they are stigmatized by their use of the native tongue," they said.

The petitioners and government and instructional studies had shown that elementary schoolchildren could just learn how to read and write in English, and that the use of Filipino would enable them to learn to read and write since it is easy for them to understand.

"Studies have shown that this change will make students stay in school longer, learn better, quicker and more permanently and will in fact be able to use the first language as a bridge to more effective learning in English and Filipino," they said.

The petition was filed at the Supreme Court Wednesday last week by Cruz, Almario, Barquisa and congressional candidates and former professor Gamon Bulosan.

Cruz and Almario stressed the petitioners were not against English per se, since most of their works in the language, but for the improvement of the educational system.

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JOB Market

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The FIRST ever Kasaysayan ng Bahay-Pilipino will trace the evolution of the Filipino dwelling from the time the rice terraces were built up to the present. This event will also highlight how the government has consistently made available to the average Filipino a host of housing projects through these years.

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TI No. 2 on SEC's top 1,000 firms with sales of ₱158B

DALLAS-BASED TEXAS INSTRUMENTS (TI) is a multinational semiconductor company that develops and manufactures digital signal processors and other integrated circuits. It was founded in 1930 as Geophysical Service, Inc. (GSI) and was renamed Texas Instruments in 1951. The company is headquartered in Dallas, Texas, and has operations in more than 25 countries, employing about 34,000 people worldwide. It is one of the largest semiconductor companies in the world, with annual revenues of over $13 billion.

TI's products are used in a wide range of applications, including automotive, industrial, communications, computers, consumer electronics, and medical. The company's digital signal processors are used in mobile phones, digital cameras, and other devices that require high-speed processing of audio, video, and data. TI also makes analog integrated circuits, which are used to convert real-world signals, such as sound and light, into digital signals that can be processed by computers.

TI has a long history of innovation and has been awarded numerous patents for its technologies. The company is also known for its commitment to corporate social responsibility, and has been recognized for its efforts in areas such as environmental protection, diversity, and community involvement.

In the Philippines, TI has been operating since 1974 and employs about 1,500 people. The company's operations in the country include assembly and testing of semiconductors, as well as research and development activities. TI has been a major contributor to the Philippine economy, and has been recognized for its efforts in areas such as education, training, and job creation.

LAGUNA CITY hosts the US-based Texas Instruments Inc., which is the world's biggest maker of mobile phone chips. TI chose the Philippines over China for the expansion of its assembly and operations. The new site will be at the Clark Freeport Zone in Pampanga.

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Texas Instruments picks RP over China for $1-B plant

From page A1

He said the win is a sure sign that the Philippines had honed its niche as one of the best investment destinations in Asia.

The TI plant in Baguio conducts final assembly and testing of semiconductors for TI's customers in the computer, aerospace, telecommunications and automotive industries in the United States, Asia and Europe.

New site in Clark

"The new site in Clark will incorporate many of the leadership environmental design features that are first used by Texas Instruments in the United States," McArthur said.

TI senior vice president Kevin Ritchie said the Philippines was up against Thailand and China as possible sites of TI's new plant.

"After a period of time we narrowed it down to China and the Philippines and then we made the final selection of the Philippines," Ritchie said in a press briefing in Malacañang.

Performance of Baguio site

Ritchie said TI considered a lot of factors, including the incentives offered by the particular country and the availability and quality of the workforce.

"At the end of the day, what brought us to the Philippines was really the performance of our site in Baguio. TI has a 28-year history in the Philippines, and the Baguio site is one of the best sites we have in TI. The quality of the people there, the quality of the operations gave us high confidence we would be able to set up a new site (in Clark)," he said.

"We're very happy and proud to be announcing this expansion today. We look forward to a very successful facility that will be a showcase both for the Philippines and TI long into the future," Ritchie said.

Start production in 2008

Ritchie said work on the 77,000-square-meter site would begin in July or August this year and production would start by the second half of 2008.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila said the TI expansion in Clark would be done over a 10-year period.

"I believe the $1 billion is just the initial amount that will be poured into this project and, of course, this would lead to more jobs in the next coming years," Favila said.

Up to 10,000 new jobs

"As a subsequent meeting at the Department of Trade and Industry, Favila said TI's expansion project could cost up to $1.7 billion and create a total of 10,000 new jobs or full capacity.

Favila said the eight hectares at Clark that TI would initially develop had been declared a special economic zone.

"This is the first economic to be located in a freeport zone," he said. "The Philippine Economic Zone Authority would be administering the area."

Suppliers

CTC chair Rainier Reinoso and CTC president Lee Lana have said they are eyeing another 30 ha for the possible location of TI's major suppliers.

"TI officials say that they have about 000 suppliers and that they were in talks with at least three who already signified interest to put up their own facilities nearby," Favila said.

He said TI only asked for a secure and stable supply of electricity and water.

In Mohebsburg, Ritchie credited Barbara Vera, president of TI Philippines, for the successful operation of TI Baguio. He said Vera would also head the operations in Clark.

"We thank the government for all the support it has given us not only for this project but also for TI in Baguio for the last 28 years," Vera said.

Reinoso said the CTC would support its newest and biggest locator. "We look forward to 28 years of very harmonious relations with you, "he said.

One of top exporters

Lilia de Lima, Philippine Economic Zone Authority chief, said TI was one of the country's top exporters.

"(That) is a sweet semiconductor thing for the 90-piece because of the job generation, export earnings, transfer of technology and the many consumer projects (of TI) just like what it did in Baguio as part of its corporate social responsibility," De Lima said.

Electronic exports make up nearly 75 percent of Philippine shipments abroad and are a key driver for the economy.

Mike Clancy, chief executive of the Philippine Business Leaders Forum, said the deal would help banish the country's tarnished image as an investment destination.

The Philippines attracted $2.95 billion in foreign investments last year, much less than its Southeast Asian neighbors.

A survey by Hong Kong-based Political and Economic Risk Consultancy recently found the Philippines to be one of the most corrupt countries in Asia-Inclusions in... PEER report from Bernie M. Dominguez and MV

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

STL rigging seen to raise poll funds

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—SMALL TOWN LOTtery (STL) bettors have reported suspicions that several draws have been rigged to get more money for the electoral campaign of local candidates in Pampanga.

> 'The same numbers keep showing up. That's robbery...'

In least four bettors now not interested in the business on Wednesday to report their complaints.

Bonny Mariscla, STL operations chief of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office in Pampanga, did not reply to a call and text message to confirm the complaints.

PCSO STL project manager Fernando Quiñones said on Thursday that in STL, rigging was "impossible to do."

"The draw is similar to the lotto in that there are many people who want to thwart the STL project," he said.

Where the increase seen to sue one of the complainants, a resident in Barangay Dolores four, more drawn; and 55-26 on April 29 more and April 30 morning draws.

"The same numbers keep showing up. That's robbery," said the man who is in his 60s. He said he observed these did not happen so often in past elections.

Asked if the trend of recurring numbers is also manifested in STL Quiñones replied: "The numbers that come out are beyond any human intervention as combinations may come out anytime (in) at any draw."

According to him, draws that are held in Apalit were set "always open to the general public to prove that everything is manipulative." The draws, he said, are held at 11/F Select Building in Barangay Sampaloc in Apalit town.

The bettor also noted there were many "kuskus" or numbers that were similar to the previous draws. He counted as four eight numbers of this kind.

"It's clear that they often take money so that they would have money to spend for politics. Perhaps it is like that because they say the money is for the town fiesta," he said.

Asked why he was grumbling about this, he explained: "I'm a bettor. I spend P200 or more a day on the game. I don't want to be cheated."

Like in "jueteng," the winning numbers are displayed in STL outlets, usually a one-table affair in the public markets, or are announced by collectors. Like in jueteng, too, the winners and their prize money are not publicly announced.

Two collectors of San Fernando confirmed getting similar complaints from other bettors.

"Some do not want to bet anymore because their steps of determining their presentation are messed up," a collector said. Emelie Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

SMALL TOWN BETTING. Assigned to explain "jueteng," officials bettors for hosting the same business as the illegal numbers game that it seeks to eradicate. NOEL ORTEGA

'Jueteng' men called to help in Bong Pineda wife's gov bid

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—SEE picted "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda has met with 1,000 habal-habal (motorcycle) drivers and kabyaw (collectors) of the illegal numbers game on Wednesday night and tapped their help to the gubernatorial campaign of his wife, Small Business Corp. chair Lilia Pineda, according to her rival, Cathedral priest Eddie Panlilio in a statement later on Thursday.

Panlilio, 57, could not be reached for comment. He earlier told the Inquirer he was not running against Lilia Pineda.

Panlilio said he learned of the meeting from a reference in Basel, or (sorta who was present in the gathering held at the farm owned of Bacolor Mayor Bonton Dungca in Barangay Macabacle, also in Bacolor.

Reached by phone, Dungca said it was he who invited Bong Pineda to come to his place.

"I told him there are many people in my town and that Honey Baby (Lilia) is not here so would be nice to come over, meet them, talk to them about her campaign," the mayor said.

Dungca admitted that the crowd comprised of "some STL collectors from Bacolor, but many were from the office."

Panlilio said he has reasons to be "alarmed" about the meeting because it showed the "apparent role of jueteng in the campaign of Lilia Pineda." He has campaigned on a platform of good governance, with plans to stop jueteng and quarry corruption, issues that are linked to Lilia Pineda, 58, and ex-electioneer son, Rida Laguio, 28.

Sorry

If the rule-line, Panlilio said he "felt sorry for those workers whose only interest is to earn a living for their families. They are being used in electoral campaigning."

Those who came separately work in the City of San Fernando and in the towns of Sta. Ana, Minalin and Bacolor—all in the province's third district.

The informant reported not seeing Lilia Pineda in the meeting. Reached by phone, she said she did not know about the event.

Sr. Socorro Ines, involved in her campaign, would not confirm the meeting either but surmised that if Bong Pineda indeed held one, it could be his own initiative to help his wife. Lilia Pineda had been a key player in the latter's disbarment public office, her husband had denied out of politics. The last month of his sentence not known.

Panlilio's source claimed that Bong Pineda arrived at midnight and posed for photos with "the usual cast to stamp the whitening of Baby Lilia's endorsement."

Bong Pineda was said to have also spoken against the priest by saying, "This isn't by his band being, for sure, a well-to-do."

The informant said that to ensure that Panlilio was making money out of the donations to his campaign.

Donations

Panlilio said his campaign is running on donations that are "properly accounted for by a finance committee and judiciously used by [our] campaign managers."

The informant reported that collectors were not given incentives. He believed that money would come later because their own managers "remained for another meeting with 1-2." Those managers are the ranks they call Bong Pineda as number one collector.

Also on Thursday, Lapid field personnel to check on reports that money was being distributed in the meetings of Lilia Pineda or a endorsed here and in Cabiao, Gapan, Panlilio said the reports were "not true."

The Wednesday meeting, and the reported incidents of vote-buying, saw Panlilio training opposite to others as "chosen candidates who are good, honest and genuinely want to help public good." Emelie Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

Solon warns of poll fraud in Lanao Sur

MARAWI CITY—LANAO DEL Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon Jr. said massive cheating could take place in his province unless the Commission on Elections (Comelec) takes steps to purge the list of "flying voters."

Macarambon, who is running in the Lanao del Sur gubernatorial race under President Macapagal-Arroyo's Kampi party, claimed that almost one fourth of the more than 600,000 registered voters in the province are "outsiders" or non-residents.

"They are Christian voters from neighboring provinces and cities hauled by unscrupulous politicians," he said.

Macarambon did not specify how he got this information.

Wa-Arafik, vice mayor Gen Bashir Bimbalan (Liberal Party, Provincial Affairs Cabal), and incumbent Marawi City Mayor Omar Solitario Alonto (PDSP), could not be reached for comment.

Macarambon Bimbalan, head of the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society Organizations based here, said Simbahan's remarks were unfair to a citizenry working hard to improve the country's electoral process.

In Zamboanga City, Archbishop Martin Jumoad said he did not allow PPCRV to deploy members in his province.

He said this was merely for security reasons.

Jumoad said during the 2004 elections, two priests suspected in his diocese were fatally killed while conducting NCCB's poll watch.

"Besides, we experienced that cheating is not on the precinct level, cheating is done in the Comelec," he said. Charlie Señoso, Edwin Fernandez, Noel Mendoza and Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

PRESSING MATTER
A key opposer not to be interested in an ongoing campaign of Sen. Panlilio Lanao, who is running for reelection. Lanao's campaign staff, however, said the boy's presence alone in the rally shows his parents were interested in the candidate's platform of good governance and free action.

Susan Roces endorses JDV opponent

DAGUPAN CITY—ACTRESS SUsan Roces endorsed on Monday the congressional bid of Mayor Benjamin Lim, who is running against Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. in Pangasinan's fourth district.

Roces, who was guest during the Dagupan Festival celebration here, said she was endorsing Lim because of his principles and how he governs, "which are the qualities that are inherent to Dagupenos."

"He has principles," Roces told reporters after the event.

"Are you surprised I am supporting Benjie Lim in his bid for Congress? It's because he didn't ask me to. Endorsements are not arranged. People do not have to ask. If one deserves an endorsement, people who know you well just volunteer," she said.

She said she considers Lim as one of her real friends and that of her late husband, actor-star Fernando Poe Jr., who trained his cousin to Ate Carlton City and Manganese years.

"As much as possible, if there is an occasion in the province, we make it a point to come, most especially in memory of the good parents of my husband. So, we find for the Pangasinenses. I look forward to [being] some improvements here in Pangasinan most especially the hospitals...the health care...as majority-poor. What have been supported," Roces said.

She said Lim knows what Pangasinan needs. "We know first hand the plight of the Pangasinense. He knows what is hurting or where the pain is coming from," she said.

She said another problem that aids Pangasinan is the lack of support for farmers.

She said she is very careful about the people or products she endorses because actor is at stake in her credibility.

"But I'm proud of the candidate I'm endorsing because I know him just as I know whatever product I endorse because I know the product," she said.

"Let's just put it this way, we keep our fingers crossed. As long as pero ang laban (the fight would be waged fairly), we stand to support him [Lim] to be able to make a good fight," Quezon Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Party-list group accused of buying votes

BAMBAN CITY—MUSLIM GROUPS have been threatened with charges against the Kalahi party-list group for alleged vote-buying.

The Kilusang Mass Employment Kalahi, which has the son of Malacañang ally Rep. Prospero Nograles as a second nominee, has been distributing groceries to constituents under the "Kalahi Caravan."

Kalahi is supposedly a party-list for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).

A crew from the local station of ABS-CBN here also managed to catch one of the distributions held in the Kalahi headquarters in Barangay Sta. a here a few days ago.

ABS-CBN said one of their cameramen was harassed by a burly man while taking footage.

The cameraman said he suspected that the unidentified man was working for Nograles or Kalahi.

Nograles said he was not informed of the incident, which ABS-CBN said took place near a police station.

He also denied that those profiting by him were harassing the media.

Omar Hermanes, BMG secretary general for Bamban Mix, said they were trying to identify their lawyers so the appropriate case to be filed against the party-list group.

"We will discuss the possible actions to take," he said.

Barangay said they have several days before the party-list group distributes their relief goods, including some by giving away groceries there.

He said a member of his group was among those who received grocery items during a Kalahi distribution in San Rafael village in Barangay Sta. a on Saturday.

The items had stickers of the Kalahi party-list once, he said.

Nograles' son, Karlo, denied the distribution of grocery items was for buying votes.

He said those who received the items are supporters of the party-list group, who have pledged to support the group's candidates in the elections.

This, he said, explains why the city has literally become a power capital during the past days.

In Cotabato City, the Genuine Opposition has petitioned the Comelec to remove city election registrar Atilan Mangelen.

GO manned her Satellite in Mamalinga petitioned Commissioner on Elections Resurreccion Borra, to remove in-charge of the Administrative Region in Muslim Mindanao, to replace Mangelen for being a non-lawyer.

Atilanes said it is Comelec policy that only lawyers would serve as election poll officials. Abraham B. Sinsuat, Ryan D. Rosauro and Charlie C. Señoso, Inquirer Mindanao

Resuello slay suspect presented

By Yolanda Intale-Fuerzas
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LINGAYEN, PANGASINAN—Philippine National Police chief, Director General Oscar Calderon, presented to reporters on Thursday one of the suspects in the killing of San Carlos City Mayor Julius Resuello and his security aide Rolando Martinez, but said the police result was not over yet as they were still looking for the mastermind.

Calderon said Angelito Soriano was a "principal suspect by direct participation" and that the police were searching for the "principal suspect by inducement" or the one who ordered him to kill Resuello.

Soriano was being detained at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group office at the provincial police headquarters here after he was taken from a hospital where he was being treated for a bullet wound in the foot.

On Wednesday police filed double murder and multiple frustrated murder charges against Soriano, Cesar de Guzman and nine other suspects at the San Carlos City prosecutor's office.

Calderon said the slugs found at the crime scene were similar to those used in the killing of Mayor Julius Vice Mayor Adolfo Aquino in 2005.

"The slugs and the empty shells have the same identities so it means (the suspects) are hired guns," he said.

Police are looking at politics as the motive for Resuello's murder as De Guzman, one of the suspects in the killing, was reported to working for another politician in San Carlos City.

De Guzman, alias Kabesa, is still at large and a P500,000 reward is being offered for any information that will lead to his arrest.

The money was contributed by concerned citizens in the province, according to Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Ilocos region police director.

Police showed a video clip, taken during the coronation night on Saturday when Resuello was shot, that captured an image of a man in white shirt and white cap who was "holding something heavy."

The image was that of De Guzman. The footage also showed Soriano's arm around De Guzman.

Resuello's son Julius, now the city mayor, thanked police for solving the crime. "Our family is happy that the suspect has been arrested but we hope that the mastermind will be unmasked soon," he said.

"I ask for your prayers and if you have information on the other suspect, please inform the author ities. You may send the information through text messages," he said.

He also said his family has asked the National Bureau of Investigation to help solve the case.

Julius said he did not know any of the suspects, although Supt. Manuel Velasco, CIDG provincial head and head of Task Force Resuello, said De Guzman used to work with the slain mayor years ago.

Group of mayors tells police: Solve murder

ILOILO CITY—THE COUNTRY'S city mayors called on the police to immediately solve the murder of San Carlos City Mayor Julius Resuello in Pangasinan.

"We call upon the Philippine National Police to act with urgency and determination to solve this criminal and bring the killers to justice," said Mayor Jerry Trefias, president of the 115-member League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP).

Trefias said the city mayors also called on authorities "to swiftly arrest all those implicated in (the) ghastly murder (including those who did not pull the trigger but have been part of the planning for (the) this merciless attack."

Trefias added, "we further call on any members of the community that may have information on this case to come forward so that those merchants may face the full might of the law."

On Monday, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) placed the province of Pangasinan under Comelec control, authorizing the commission to take charge of police functions to prevent more bloodshed.

"We condemn all election-related violence incidents," said Trefias.

"This act of savagery committed by this gruesome deed not diminish a place in a civilized and peace-loving society... the league reminds itself in supporting a peaceful, honest, orderly and credible election," Trefias added. *David Israel Sinay, Inquirer Visayas*

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Bets told to take stand on Sierra Madre dam

By Dello T. Muñoz Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—A CATHOLIC priest and known promotor of Sierra Madre mountain ranges in northern Quezon—forced local and national candidates to declare their position on the controversial dam project in the mountain range.

Task Force Sierra Madre (TF-SM)—multisector local and national coalitions—to support its position against Lahar Gas, Our lives and the next generation's can never be equated with a 30-year project," Fr. Wes Mustaza, TFSM chair, said in a phone interview.

Mustaza said the planned dam project in Tanay, Rizal, and General Nakar, Quezon, Mustaza has expressed fear that the proposed dam inside the mountain watershed would displace approximately 3,000 families living in seven barangays in Tanay and one barangay in General Nakar.

Mustaza said the resulting diminished water flow in the Agos River could affect navigation, irrigation, fisheries in the two municipalities.

He also expressed alarm that the project location, which is near geologic faults, would endanger the lives of people living near the proposed dam.

"In the event that the dam breaks, a repeat of the devastation flood in 2004 can result in double," he said.

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The Lahar, that buried as the Xalikes Kanan [left eight] rivers, traverses the slopes of the Sierra Madre and drains into the Pacific shoreline on the side of Quezon province.

During the Marcos regime, the dam project was proposed to be a part of the so-called industrial complex plan in northeastern Luzon.

But due to the strong opposition to the project being waged by indigenous peoples, the project was shelved—leaving only two diversion tunnels as grim reminders of the aborted project.

The Arroyo administration plans to resurrect the controversial project of the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage System with financial assistance worth $1 billion from the Asian Development Bank.

The Task Force Kalikasan (TFK), a multisectoral environmentalist group in General Nakar town, condemned the passage of Resolution No. 2007-21 by the Sangguniang Bayan allowing the construction of a hydroelectric power plant along Kanan River in the upper part of the Sierra Madre.

In a statement, the group said the suspected resolution mandates "haphazardly, hurriedly, secretively and without prior public consultation and participation."

The TFK also noted that the Kanan River is an area declared a hot spot for conservation by the Philippine Biodiversity Conservation Priorities.

Antique check distribution questioned

By Nestor B. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

SAN JOSE DE BUENAVISTA, Antique—Senate Minority Leader Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III has asked the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to disqualify Governor Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez from running in the May 14 elections for violating election gun ban rules.

Pimentel, who is running for reelection as senator, said Zaldivar-Perez should be disqualified because she allegedly violated the ban on public spending during the election period.

In an eight-page joint petition filed before the Comelec office in Antique on April 23, Senator Antonio Trillanes and former Sen. Aniceto Bantug Jr. sought the disqualification of Perez, and scores of her supporters in the Liberal Party (Lakas-Kampi-CMD).

Trillanes and Pimentel alleged that Perez and her co-respondents violated Section 261 (d) (6) (ii) of the Omnibus Election Code, which prohibits the release, disbursement or expenditure of any public funds during the election period.

The petitioners said Perez violated the law when she allegedly distributed checks worth P1,000 each to residents of Barangay Tigbaboy in Hamtic town on March 29 during a campaign sortie in the province.

Perez denied that she committed any violation.

"The checks were issued on March 29 but its actual delivery to the barangays was only delayed due to bureaucratic red tape," Perez said.

"It is political gimmick and harassment. They accused eight of us and made a big fuss out of this because they want to topple me down," said Perez.

She said she has ordered a stop to the payments of all the checks until after the elections because she does not want them to be used as a "propaganda tool."

Videra backer stabbed

BAGUIO CITY—The three police officers were among those charged with frustrated murder in connection with the shooting incident.

Police are filing illegal possession of firearms against Damong at this time while a separate case will be filed against Fernandez for attempted murder. Damong is reportedly a supporter of Gov. Eugenio Ticlao. Frank Cimatu, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Erija bet replaced by wife

SAN JOSE CITY—Barangay Captain Alexander Bolotta withdrew from the race on Thursday. Joy and folded his wife as his replacement.

Bolotta's running mate, Hanto Salvador, however, is supporting another candidate for mayor who happens to be his wife's brother.

Mayor Bolotta, who was running for his third and last term under the Lakas-CMD, withdrew from the race for personal reasons. His wife, Marivic, filed her certificate of candidacy as his replacement. Aquilino Pimentel, Inquirer Central Luzon

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Deadline for submission of sealed bids is on May 16, 2007, not later than 2:00 p.m., which will be opened on the same date, 2:00 p.m. at PNOC Exploration Corporation, Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

PNOC-EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any irregularity therein and accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to its interest. The decision of PNOC-EC must be final and binding.

(signed)
ENGR. ANTONIO B. CERVANTES
Officer-in-Charge
Corporate Affairs Group

(PNOC)

Rasul receives Muslim Democrat award from US-based group

RASUL

AMINA RASUL BERNARDO, THE lead convenor of the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy (PCID) and editor of the Mindanews, will receive the Democracy Award of the Year by the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) in ceremonies held on April 27.

The awarding ceremony was during the launch of the CSID 6th annual conference.

This year's theme was "Women's Rights in Muslim Communities and Islam."

The Muslim Democrat of the Year award is given by CSID to an outstanding advocate of democracy in the Muslim world, particularly to an individual who overcomes hardships or challenges in efforts to promote democracy.

The CSID is a nonprofit organization based in Washington and is dedicated to studying Islamic and democratic political thought and experience. Some into a modern Islamic democratic discourse.

Rasul follows a distinguished list of past Muslim Democrat awardees that includes former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Egyptian democracy activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim.

In his speech during the 6th CSID Annual Conference held at Georgetown University, Rasul said the rise of violent extremism in Muslim communities can be checked by genuine democratization.

He said, "Killing the extremists will not end terrorism," Rasul said. "Genuine democracy, which will provide more space for the marginalized (like Muslim women) will be better able to stem the militancy and extremism at source."

Pichay caravan readies for Manila

SENATORIAL CANDIDATE PROSPERO PICHAY Jr.'s Laoang-wide caravan prepared for its final push, with Bicol Mayor Becky after its three contingents from Norther's Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Bicol converged Thursday.

In a tour of Cavite, the fifth among the provinces with the biggest voting populations, Pichay's political Czar Ismael Mathay expressed his support for Pichay's endorsement and to the local candidates.

On the first day of the Cavite leg of the caravan, Mayor Becky of the Visayan Bicolano representative's town, accompanied him as he stopped through the towns of Carmona, General Mariano Alvarez, Silang, Tanza, Rosario, Trece Martires, Imus, Bacoor, Kawit, Noveleta, Rosario, Tanza, former Governor Erineo "Ernie" Maliksi and Governor Jonvic Remulla.

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PHILCOMSAT HOLDINGS CORPORATION

NOTICE TO ALL BANKS, STOCKHOLDERS, AFFILIATES, CLIENTS, SUPPLIERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

On 12 APRIL 2007, the REGIONAL TRIAL COURT of MAKATI CITY issued an ORDER in CIVIL CASE NO. 04-1049 entitled "Philippine Communications Satellite Corporation represented by Victor Africa vs. Philcomsat Holdings Corporation, Luis K. Lokin, Jr., Enrique L. Lorzin and Philip Bordett", which states:

"WHEREFORE, premises considered, the Court hereby grants the plaintiff's Motion. ... (a) a writ of execution be issued directing the implementation of the following orders:

1) the individuals elected by defendant (Enrique) Lorzin in the 2004 PHC AGM, and re-proclaimed to be PHC's board of directors, namely: Enrique Lorzin, Julio Ashdown, Manuel Andal, Luis Lokin, Jr., Prudencio Somera, Jr., Manuel H. Nieto, Jr., Roberto V. San Jose, Philip Bordett, Oliverio Laperal, Benito Araneta and Roberto Abad and all their representatives or agents are enjoined from continuing to act as PHC board of directors;

2) the proxy of plaintiff voted in Victor V. Africa is declared valid and that the individuals elected by plaintiff's proxy in the 2004 PHC AGM namely: Victor V. Africa, Rolando L. Bildner, Katrina Ponce-Enrile, Honorio Poblador III, Federico Agcaoili, Sylvia K. Hicaroso and Jose Ma. Ojeabe are declared as the rightful board of directors of PHC; and

3) the defendants are directed to render an accounting of funds of PHC since 2004 up to the present within 15 days from the finality of this Order.

SO ORDERED."

On 24 APRIL 2007, pursuant to the above-quoted ORDER and the Writ of Execution dated 26 APRIL 2007, the following were duly elected, recognized and declared as the legitimate and validly elected members of the Board of Directors of Philcomsat Holdings Corporation:

VICTOR V. AFRICA
ERLINDA I. BILDNER
KATRINA PONCE-ENRILE
HONORIO POBLADOR III
FEDERICO R. AGCAOILI
SYLVIA K. HICAROSO
JOSE MA. OJEABE

Messrs. OLIVERIO G. LAPERAL, PABLO L. LORREJAT and PRUDENCIO SOMERA were likewise elected as directors of Philcomsat Holdings Corporation. On the same APRIL 24, 2007 Board of Directors Meeting, Philcomsat Holdings Corporation elected new officers, changed bank signatories and brought back its principal office to Taiseens Plaza. On APRIL 26, 2007, a Temporary Restraining Order by the 14th Division of the Court of Appeals, Justice Magdangal de Leon, presiding, was issued to Makati RTC. Said TRO, which applies only to RTC Makati Branch 139 and not the private shareholders, is based on the second of two similar petitions filed at separate divisions of the Court of Appeals by Lorzin, Bordett et al, which is a clear case of forum-shopping. Moreover, said TRO seeks to enjoin acts that have already been implemented and accomplished.

Notice is hereby given that any transaction entered into by Enrique Lorzin, Manuel Andal, Julio Ashdown, Luis Lokin, Jr., Philip Bordett, Benito Araneta, Roberto Abad, Ashoni Tan, Roberto San Jose, Delfin Aragon and their representatives or agents, supposedly for and on behalf of the Corporation, are unauthorized and invalid and will not be honored by the Corporation.

Any information which may assist the legitimate board of Philcomsat Holdings Corporation in protecting and preserving the assets may be given thru Atty. Diocaldo at cellphone # 0920-901-7221. Thank you.

Cory's phone bugged; AFP denies involvement

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"Naturally, the immediate suspect would be the government. It's just a bit mysterious because my instinct is already cold and reserved. And with Snow Magic happy on the electronic [sheet] scene, it clearly violates the law with its propriety," he said.

The 74-year-old former President said she had suspected that her phone line was bugged "ever since the martial law" period that started in 1972.

"I've been through the worst times," she told reporters at a press conference "all of us in the opposition [have since silenced their fears] that our phone was bugged ever since I was President. There was never any wiretapping since."

But she did not say who she thought had been tapping her phone.

'Very serious' matter

The Armed Forces of the Philippines, through AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, denied involvement.

Gonzales said he would look into the matter but his did not think the government was responsible.

"Bugging a former President is very serious. I do not think [this] should be done even by the government. I will investigate and find the culprit," Gonzales told the reporters by phone.

He added: "I will see all the resources of my office [to find out] who did this]. I am taking this very seriously.

"I don't think it's the government [who did it]."

Asked why Gonzales said: "Just suppose, the device used was very wonderful. It seems that it was meant to be found by Cory."

He said that he had watched Aquino's press conference where she showed the media the bugging device.

Asked who he thought might have been behind the bugging, Gonzales said: "Boo comes rule out anything at this time. But I still find it very difficult to believe that the government will do something like this, which is very crazy."

He said there was "almost that possibility" that the opposition was responsible.

But Gonzales stressed: "I do not want to jump to conclusions. Let our investigators [do this]."

No comment from Palace

President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson refused to be drawn into the issue.

"I don't have any information on that. I am sorry I cannot comment," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said when asked about the wiretapping incident.

But he said that if the bugging of Aquino's phone line had indeed occurred, it should be looked into.

Asked to comment on speculation that the bugging was the government's handiwork, Bunye said: "It's very difficult to speculate on speculations. He said: have no endless cycle of rumors. That's the least we need at this time, on the front we need at this time, on the party not to make any comments. If there is really an issue there, then this should be investigated by the authorities."

Bunye also brushed off a question on whether he could give an assurance that the government was not behind the bugging.

"I am not going to say that. I [question], we ought be rubbishing or confirming something which did not happen at all. So I would prefer that this be investigated, if there is such an occurrence, and that the results of the investigation be made public," he said.

In a statement, FLRT confirmed that a countermeasure crew found the device during routine inspection of its facilities at about 3 p.m. on May 1.

Routine inspection

It said that upon opening the company's cross-connect cabinet located on Times Street, the crew found a device and which appeared to be a sign crocodile attached to a black box."

FLRT added that after "further investigation," the crew found that the black box that was connected to the phone line installed at Aquino's residence.

The standard operating procedure, the crew removed the black box and took it to Aquino.

FLRT said it was conducting its own investigation.

Meanwhile, NTC director Gutierrez said the commission should have called the police before disconnecting the bug found in FLRT cabinet No. 243.

Gutierrez said FLRT personnel "should not have disconnected the device and left it inside the telephone box. But they said they wanted to inform Mrs. Aquino of the wiretapping activity and that's why they took it out of the box and he ought it to the house, "he said.

Nevertheless, Gutierrez said, he had ordered his men to thoroughly investigate the discovery of the bugging device made up of blue wiring, a black power supply adaptor and an ordinary tape recorder.

He said the government's independent supervisor, Cesar Montano, had promised full cooperation in the NTC investigation.

A clay later

The bugging device was discovered a day after deputies consolidated call for the immediate disclosure of the life of Jesus Joseph Burgos, the missing—and believed abducted—son of the late press freedom icon Jose Burgos Jr.

"I appeal to the highest authorities of the land to send the clear signal to the field that Jesus Burgos must be surfaced immediately by whoever is holding him, whether he is in military custody or in the custody of the President said in statement.

But Gutierrez said the illegal wiretapping should not be connected to Aquino's statement on the disappearance of the young Burgos.

Aquino had a heated exchange with Mr. Arroyo in 2005, when the jailed opposition figures in calling for the latter's resignation over allegations of vote-rigging in the 2004 presidential election.

The bugging device to rest in the garage of the QCPD, five days recorder purportedly containing phone conversations between with Aquino on her suspect.

Gutierrez said an initial examination of the device showed that it may not have had the hundreds of an report. "It is unusable."

He also said police investigators would find out how Chief Inspector the bugging were able to gain access to the locked FLRT phone box.

'Anyone can do it'

Assembly anyone with the technical knowhow can conduct a wiretapping operation now, the military's Bacarro told reporters.

"There was no affair by the AFP to bug the former President," he said, adding that the operation would have been conducted by some private "whose interest I've no idea [is to keep customers secret]."

Bacarro said certain groups would take advantage of this discovery to again blaming the military. "We will be the easiest excuse, so the savvy use."

Asked whether the AFP had the capability to tap communications lines, Bacarro candidly said he did not know.

But when reminded that the military had been conducting surveillance work on suspects, he said wiretapping is usually done by the AFP if it were covered by a court order.

Still, Bacarro said that with the advances in technology "anybody can do it."

"You can even use your phone as a listening device ... It's just like an extension—there's the cut-out," he said.

Bacarro said the discovery of the bug had talked most questions apart from other planted it.

He said these questions were: "Who were the land line users?" and "How [the bug] placed there to be latest usually discovered?"

Shock, dismay

The Black and White Movement, an opposition group that called for Ms. Arroyo's resignation, said it was "shocked and dismayed to learn of the wiretapping of Cory Aquino."

"If she can be tapped, we can all be tapped," the group said, adding that those responsible for the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal in 2005 had never been brought to justice.

"They seem when bugs of her supporters

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IN THE KNOW

What's a bug?

A "bug" is a concealed listening device used to eavesdrop on conversations and monitor those to a listening post.

A powerful bug allows interception by remote access a conversation being conducted thousands away.

The most well-known type of surveillance bug device is the radio frequency (or RF) bug, which uses a combination of tiny electronic circuits. But today, wireless eavesdropping is not the only way to defeat using an outlet/tampering devices.

Another type is the infrared bug, which converts sound into light waves and transmits them by a beam of infrared (IR) waves.

Telephone bugs can be attached to the voice circuits, so as to be able to monitor telephone conversations.

Laser bugs can be directed at windows, detecting acoustic sound vibrations caused by conversations. The opposite is then reflected and converted back into recognizable sounds at the listening post.

Parabolic bugs like sound-gathering devices, consists of a directional light or optical pickup, which is tuned to a concealed (IR) source

Protective policy on sugar hurting food processing

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DOMESTIC INDUSTRIES HIDE themselves in cavity with a long-standing trade policy on sugar as protection measures favoring suppliers retard the growth of food processors using high-quality sugar. The commodity and should their attempts to expand exports.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis, president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport), says his group has been campaigning for the removal of the protection of the sugar industry.

Philexport members include the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization and the Philippine Chamber of Food Manufacturers, which in turn represent small-, medium- and large-scale food firms, including market leaders.

"Domestic companies that use sugar as input have been on this since the 1970s and even earlier," Ortiz-Luis says. "So far, these industries have not been able to effectively counter [the strong influence] of the sugar firms."

He says food and beverage producers in Pasay in hard on being in supplies from abroad because of the high tariffs and prohibitive customs rates.

As of 2000, the lowest tariff on sugar was 36 percent, but this rate was exceeded even though goods import sugar paid as much as 100 percent of value, especially if the shipments were off-quota, or re-exceeding the allowed volume.

Further, Ortiz-Luis says domestic sugar is priced higher than the international market rate, if it is at all available for purchase.

"The sugar millers have agreed to give sugar users relief by approving, through the Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), to sell sugar at non-competitive prices," Ortiz-Luis says. "Still, volume is limited with 'yearly quotas that are changed regularly."

He is referring to the market quota system, under which locally produced sugar is classified into five categories based on market destination—"A" for the US import quota market; "B" for the domestic market; C" for reserve; "D" for export to countries other than the United States; and "E" which may be bought at the world price by exporting firms using sugar as input.

In 1992, the SRA created another quota category, S1, which is also for the domestic market but may be withdrawn from storage only after 120 days.

A study made by The Asia Foundation and released in 1999—which incidentally exposes and still describes the current situation—explains that the market allocation system ensures the domestic supply of sugar when the world price is greater than the domestic price, when US prices are high (causing domestic sugar producers to favor export), or when the foreign exchange rate is "uncompetitive" (the peso depreciates against the dollar to import cost more).

Demand exceeds supply

The study says this market allocation system is practiced worldwide, citing interviews with industry sources.

Also, while importation of refined sugar was liberalized starting in 1981 amid an oversupply and depressed world prices, the study says "the SRA continues to exercise regulatory powers over sugar importation, affirming its entity and practically isolating the domestic market from imports."

The SRA regulatory powers include monitoring of sugar imports, imposing of monitoring fees, and prescribing administrative procedures. Even if the imported sugar is not used in food processing.

Food processors' production requirements are the main cause domestic demand for sugar usually exceeds local supply.

The refined sugar is a main ingredient in chocolates and chocolate products, which on average can mix up to 50 percent sugar while other sugar and chocolate confectionaries contain an average of some 75 percent sugar.

Practices discourage growth

Data from the Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization Inc. (Philfoods) show the amount of sugar used in various food products made by its members—citrus fruit juices, 25-30 percent; confectioneries, 60-80 percent; preserved fruits, 50-60 percent; candied fruits, 65-70 percent; ready-to-drink juices, 30 percent; beverages, 90-95 percent, and sauces, 30-35 percent.

Considering such demand for sugar and the current cost difficulty and high cost of securing supplies, the current trade practices simply do not encourage growth of the country's processed food industry, according to Ortiz-Luis.

Life once 'sweeter' at Hacienda Luisita

By Russell Arador
Inquirer Central Luzon

HACIENDA LUISITA, TARLAC City—Bernardo Salvador was only 13 years old when he started working at the vast sugarcane plantation then owned by the Spanish friar Compañía General de Tabacos de Filipinas, or Tabacalera.

"Life used to be better then," says Salvador, now 73. There was plenty of work to do.

That was toward noon after the Spanish owners, fearing a communist-led uprising, sold the 6,453-hectare hacienda and a sugar mill, Central Azucarera de Tarlac, in 1958 to the Tarlac Development Corp. (Tadeco) of Ayala Corporation.

The acquisition of Cojuangco, whose daughter Corazon later became the Philippine president, comprised three municipalities in Tarlac province.

The purchase price made possible through loans from the Government Service Insurance System and the Manufacturers Trust of New York, the latter guaranteed by the Central Bank of the Philippines.

Bygone era

Norberto Manotoc, 57, and Marcelino de Leon, 76, both old hands at Hacienda Luisita, share Salvador's reminiscence of a bygone era.

"In those times, there were a lot of opportunities for work. There was even so much overtime work that we sometimes got fed up working," Manotoc says.

Often, he says, harvests-season agreement would offer Sunday work but workers would refuse. Such times, Luisita workers could afford the luxury of refusing work.

Not any more.

Two years after Corazon Cojuangco-Aquino became the President after the 1986 People Power Revolution, she signed in to law a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), calling for the redistribution of private agricultural lands across the nation.

The Cojuangco family, however, held out on its landholding under a stock distribution option allowed under CARP in which farmers at the hacienda were given shares of stock in the Luisita corporation in lieu of land. The distribution drew an uncertain of the hacienda, at least on paper.

Retrenchment

On Aug. 30, 2004, about 1,000 Hacienda Luisita workers staged a strike to protest what they described as the arbitrary retrenchment of workers, including United Luisita Workers' Union (ULWU) president Rene Galang and nine other officers, management-worker history.

On Nov. 16, 2004, seven people were killed when policemen and government soldiers dismantled barricades set up by the protesters.

The conflict reached the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council, which subsequently decided to revoke the SDO arrangement and distribute the hacienda to the farmers. The case is now in the Supreme Court.

Manotoc recalls that work had been steady in the hacienda shortly after the implementation of the SDO scheme. "Work was divided among us. Sometimes one could work for only three days within a week. Sometimes we did work four days a week," he says.

Toward the 2004 strike, salaries would paralyze operations not only at the plantation but at the mill as well, workers would get only a day of work a week.

Reducing 'service stocks'

Manotoc says he suspected that management was deliberately cutting workers' "man-days"—the number of days that each hacienda worker—is required their "service stocks," which is computed on the number of days worked.

He says he was able to buy televisions and stereo sets and had his house built with other work was still abundant. Now he would not even have his broken TV repaired.

Aside from diminishing work opportunities, another adverse result of the SDO implementation was the loss of educational and hospitalization benefits their workers used to get, Manotoc says.

"Before, we enjoyed a lot of benefits. We did not pay for hospital bills. We do that now," he says.

Manotoc cites as example his confinement at the Far Eastern University Hospital in Metro Manila in 1993.

He says the company paid for his bills amounting to P92,000. "I did not pay, not even a centavo," he says.

Before, workers could send their children to school for free and could even avail of educational loans for other expenses twice a year, Manotoc says. "There was even a free school bus service."

Salvador says the culprits for the dwindling man-days were the farm machines that gradually took over a number of process so used to be handled by people in a bid to lower the cost of sugar production.

"When the machines came, opportunities for work gradually dwindled," says Salvador, who, like Manotoc and De Leon, managed to build his house when the painter was greener in the hacienda.

Nostalgic for Misay

All three found themselves "living" Asquino's stint as hacienda administrator as most beneficial to Cojuangco.

Such was their esteem for the administrator's wife Encarnacion and husband of Corazon Aquino. They felt that had Misay been alive during his wife's presidency he would have compelled her to punish not the hacienda to its farmers.

After all, regardless of the issues of the "sweetheart" deal, a collective longing for actual land ownership endures, the workers say.

De Leon, who started working as a sugarcane cutter and worked as the hacienda in 20, adds: "Imagine that the land is distributed because people could till it."

OPERATIONS at Hacienda Luisita came to a standstill for two weeks in November 2004 after negotiations failed between management and the union. INQUIRER FILE

GMA vowed to distribute Mike A's sugar lands

Front page A1

SEED that the Presidential Commission on Agrarian Reform revoked last year.

The commission cited a body of evidence showing that the deal had not led to a substantial improvement in the lives of farmer-beneficiaries, the essence of agrarian reform. The issue is now pending in the Supreme Court.

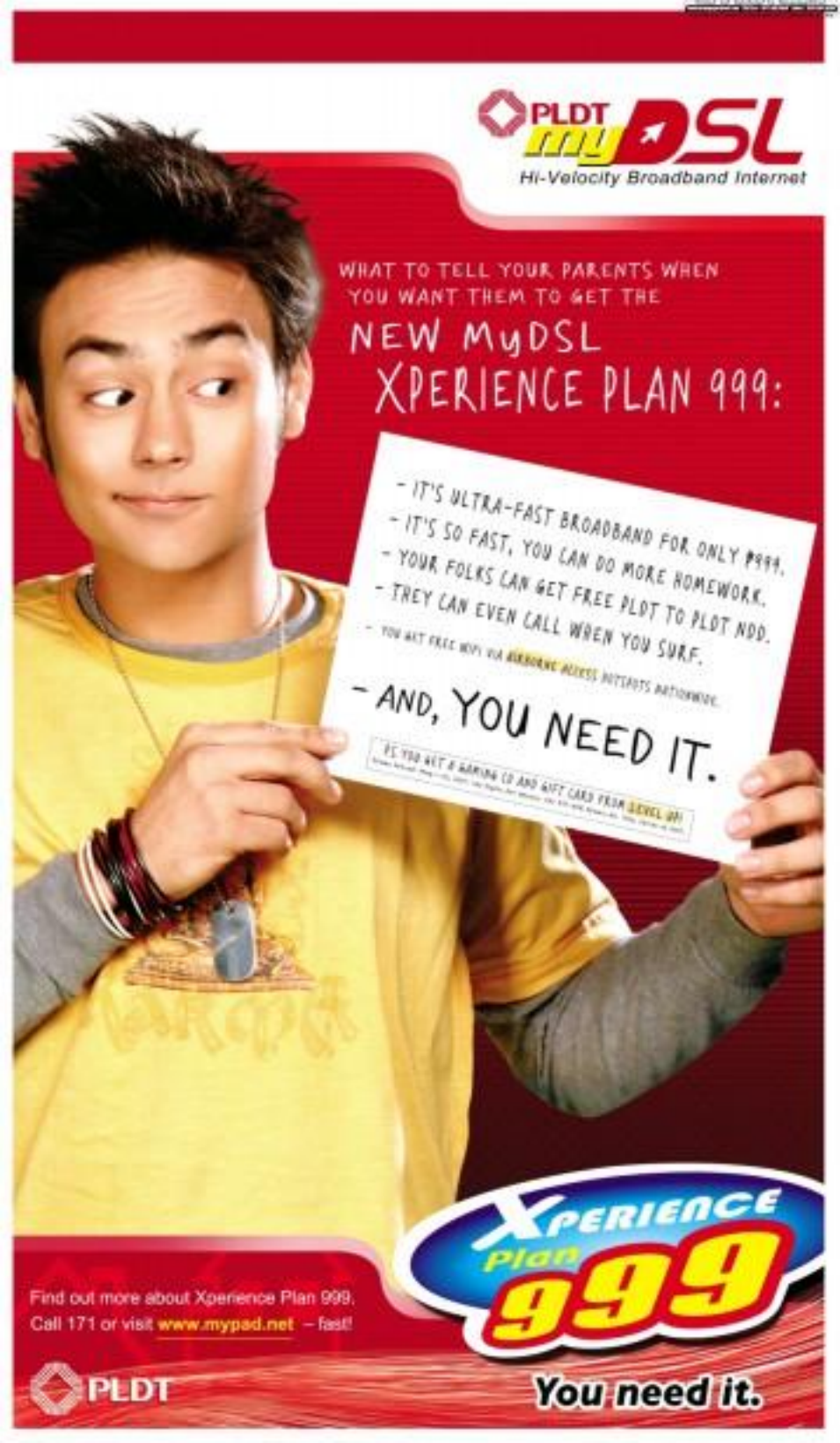
Loopholes

Critics say the Arroyo family acted on hard loopholes in the CARP law to hold on to an estimated half of its original 1,000 ha of a sugar hacienda by parceling close fields into small, family-sized farms that were then given or sold to individuals or several dozen ghost companies, or having cooperatives of loyal farmers and getting them against a very small group of pro-CARP stockers. Some of these pieces of land offered for distribution in the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) had defective titles and thus could not be conveyed.

In a late move, Negros Occ. Governor "Iggy" Arroyo, the President's brother-in-law, sought to reclassify his plantations from agricultural to industrial land so the DAR away from his property and go into the production of ethanol—a far more lucrative enterprise in the face of rising oil prices and the popularity of road-friendly biofuels.

Owners of some 600,000 ha of agricultural lands, mostly in Negros Island, have followed the Arroyos example of holding on to vast tracts of land, say administration critics, hoping that if their plantations were reclassified to industrialization by the time CARP expires in June 2008, they would keep their estates forever.

All three Government undersecretaries of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR)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Aplus METRO
Editor Oscar C. Dipasupil

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HEAVENLY AID
A bereaved relative reads the palm of a cremation lot a small box in front of a church in Manila. AP/EPA

Rifles designed as high-powered firearms seized

'Gun store owner had no permit'

By Nancy C. Carvajal

POLICE RAIDED YESTERDAY MORNING A house in Caloocan City and confiscated three crates of cocoa worth of assault rifles designed like high-powered firearms.

The owner, Alvin Estrella, 35, of no. 136 Sto. Cristo St. corner 7th Ave., Grace Park, Caloocan City was arrested.

Supt. Reynaldo Ocampo, chief of the Southern Police District Intelligence Unit, said the raid yielded at least 10 assault rifles and pistols.

"The rifles were semi-automatic or pump and could easily pass off as real guns," Ocampo said.

He said the confiscated air guns were designed as M-16 armalite rifle, M-15 armalite rifle, AK-47 rifle, Steyr rifle, shotgun carbine, G36 rifle, .45 caliber pistol and Uzzi pistol. Also confiscated from the store were leather holsters, two tactical vests and other accessories.

Ocampo said a M-16 model "armalite rifle" was offered by Estrella to an undercover agent for P15,000. He said the store was under surveillance after the police received reports from residents of alleged gun trafficking in the area.

According to data from Meinrado of Barangay 111 Zone 10, the intimation firearms shunned residents of the remote area.

"Mira ni bataan nato nuon e-wan going to the store and kuwang nabit sabay appointed as licensed firearms," the barangay official said.

Ocampo added that sale transactions usually is in the middle of the night, more also reported.

Although air soft rifles are legal, Ocampo said Estrella failed to show any documents covering his operations. "He was not able to show his license to sell, repair and display an soft rifles," Ocampo said.

The police officers disclosed that toy guns resembling real ones in size and color had proliferated of late and could be used by criminals perhaps in the coming polls fever.

He said a man with a M-16 automatic airsoft rifle was arrested in Malabon City last week. The transfer of what seemed to be a M-16 armalite airsoft rifle provoked from his bag causing panic among office commuters, Ocampo said.

The suspect, identified as Reynaldo Gallon, surrendered but no gun and pointed to Estrella as the source of the rifle.

Ocampo said charges against Estrella were yet to be determined pending further investigation. "We are looking into the identities of Estrella's buyers," Ocampo said.

Borgy mauling case gets new twist

By Jobb M. Arevilla

IN A NEW TWIST TO THE INCIDENT involving the alleged beatings of a 21-year-old student by commissioned members of Borgy Manzano, police yesterday said the fallen cops have some time to break up the mob that beat up Cadiz native on the night of April 28.

Chief Insp. Cefer Rodriguez said seven witnesses since Manzano were trying to pacify friends who were beating up Brown after a heated argument. "Some witnesses said they saw Borgy trying to break up the fight," Rodriguez told the Inquirer. The witnesses, Ruben Dorindo and Israel Tabaglon, are employees of the Embassy Inn in Tagaytay City near the site of the incident.

Brown was allegedly beaten up by Manzano of The Fort in the city. After the victim tried to talk to Manzano's girlfriend, Oriana Cadiao. Brown had cuts on the back of his head and was confined at the Makati Medical Center for several days.

In the day, Brown is rumored to police his version of the brawl. But Rodriguez said Brown's statement yesterday had no legal bearing on the case because, Dolipas had not been charged against Manzano. "We've been to allow the request of the victim's family for a reenactment," said Rodriguez, chief of the Tagaytay investigation unit.

Police said other witnesses claimed among Brown hit a glass panel near Kitchen's four months after being accused by Manzano's companions. DOI Militar Garcia, case investigator, said they discovered a shattered glass pane, it near the establishment.

Garcia said Brown's head wounds and have been also caused by broken glass. But Brown's mother, Mary Jane Abdul Torres, does not agree. "Look at my son's hands. Do you see any cuts made by glass? You have witnesses, but physical evidence is stronger than witnesses," she said.

P8M lost as 2 fires hit Cainta

SOME P8 MILLION WORTH OF PROPERTY was damaged and about 90 families lost their homes after a fire broke out early yesterday morning in Cainta, Rizal.

No one was reported injured in the incident that destroyed some 50 houses.

On Tuesday afternoon, some 45 million pounds of property was destroyed in a fire that gutted a factory on Imus Street, Block Subdivision in Cainta.

The blaze yesterday reportedly started at around 2 a.m. in the house of Hadia and Bargo Mahmoor at Block 13, Brgy. San Andres. The house had no electricity so fire investigators suspected a candle could have started the blaze. About 20 fire trucks responded to the local flame alarm. The fire was finally put out in around 4 a.m.

The fire department said the fire quickly spread because most of the houses were made of light materials. Narrow streets and sporadic rain also made it difficult for firefighters to reach the burning homes immediately.

Joseph John Bonoan

Assets seizure could hurt City Hall—Binay

By CJ Yap

THE MAYOR OF MAKATI CITY is unsure by the Bureau of Internal Revenue to recover P1.1 billion in alleged unpaid taxes could cripple operations of City Hall.

Mahati Mayor Jejomar Binay said yesterday salary bills would not be paid along with salaries of city employees, and basic or social services would not be met unless the garnishment order is in effect. "The fund the national government is shutting us down," he said.

"We're supposed to release the indemnities are promised our workers today. But now, we have to tell them that we don't have the money," Binay added.

On Wednesday the BIR ordered 34 major banks to freeze the city government's assets, as well as Binay's personal funds.

At a press conference at the City Hall with Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado, councilor, Binay questioned the serving of the garnishment order on private banks, considering that the local government banks where the city's assets are deposited.

"In the Philippine Veterans Bank alone, we have enough funds to cover the P1.1 billion (in unpaid taxes), so why did they serve the notice of garnishment to all banks?" Mercado asked.

"Isn't this a discrimination? Harassment," Binay said.

But BIR revenue officer Isidro Ruiquiza, who signed the garnishment notices, said the "blanket" notices were standard operating procedure, since they had no way of determining the amount deposited in each bank account. "Once we get confirmation that the P1.1 billion has been served then, within one minute, I can order the withdrawal of the notices of garnishment," he told the Inquirer.

The BIR alleged that the city government failed to remit a total of P1,190,331,333.38 in withholding taxes of about 8,000 employees from 1999 to 2002.

On March 9, BIR chief of the subholding tax division Marivic Galban wrote a demand letter addressed to Binay, the city treasurer and the city accountant, asking the city government to pay the alleged tax liabilities. Galban gave them until March 31 to avail of a special "one-time administrative abatement program."

Binay said the issuance of the garnishment notices was irregular since BIR Revenue Memorandum Circular No. 29-2007 gave all taxpayers until June 30 to avail of the amnesty. The issuer said he would do everything necessary to regain control of Makati's assets.

Binay, president of the United Opposition, reiterated his accusation that the BIR was acting on orders of his political enemies.

He said his political rivals knew of the BIR case several days in advance as he was told by its authorities in Seoul, reportedly.

Binay alleged that Seoul is run by the Gonzalez, Bruce Gonzalez, son of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. Chua Huina Gonzalez, is running against Binay's daughter Abigail for representative of the city's district 2. Aurelio Gonzalez son, Tess, is running for councilor.

METROBRIEFS

Cops to guard poll centers

[illegible] policemen will be deployed to guard polling centers in Metro Manila for the May 14 elections, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said yesterday. The NCRPO said a total of 3,727 policemen will be deployed a few days before the elections. They will be augmented by 150 members of the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) 2003 class, 440 police reserve and 950 members of the Regional Special Action Unit (RSAU). They will be guarding 725 polling centers presented by the city that will accept 1.5 million registered voters to cast their ballots. Lucban, Sto Niño (PNPA) and Silay would be sent as spectator cities of Pasig, Pasay and Caloocan as possible flashpoints of violent incidents related to the coming elections. PNP National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Geneson Reynoso made the statement after meeting police security in Metro Manila yesterday to monitor the situation in these areas.

Alexis Romero

Hot meat confiscated in QC market

ABOUT more 1,000 kilos of adulterated meat of hot meat were confiscated by Task Force Barangay of the National Meat Inspection Service at the QC Market at Balintawak, Bayanan City, yesterday morning. Dr. Emmanuel Lontoc, head of the NMIS accreditation, registration and enforcement division said the meat was seized after they learned it was from Angeles and was worth around P200,000. The confiscated meat did not have proper certification as required by the NMIS.

Joy P. Reyes

Ourando Ursal: 77

A WAKE in honor of National Statistician Regional Director Ourando "Mandoy" S. Ursal died in LA on April 15 in New York City, will be held at the QC Memorial Circle at Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, from today until May 7. The funeral mass will be held at the Church of the Risen Christ in Loyola Heights, Quezon City, on May 8 at 10 a.m. Ursal, 77, died of cancer. He is survived by his wife Victoria Vergara Ursal; daughters Maria Victoria Ursal, and Anna Jessa Fuentes Ursal; and Edmund Victor Ursal.

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1 shop condominium	P3,500,000.00	May 11, 2007	May 15, 2007 10:00 AM	P1,000.00

Belmonte running virtually unopposed in Quezon City

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WITH THE ELECTIONS JUST two weeks away, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte Jr.'s political rivals are unknown to many city residents.

Others mayoral candidates appear to have filed their certificates of candidacy (COC) only. People have yet to hear their campaign jingles and see their posters.

"Dawot Dilaye Belmonte ka sa mga susunod na araw," Jaz Flores, a concerned resident told the Inquirer.

The incumbent mayor is facing three candidates: Ronnie Avellanida, 61, of Project 7, Quezon City, filed his certificate of candidacy in January. He described himself as, politics as his certificate of candidacy.

Florian Jose Alvarez, 46, of Holy Spirit, Quezon City, reportedly a former actor, also filed his candidacy early. The third candidate, Andy Nonato, 44, described himself as a "social engineer."

For some voters, it is not the anonymity of Belmonte's rivals that would make them vote for

his reelection.

"Mayor Belmonte was able to deliver quality programs in the city," Edgardo Erni, an engineer who has lived in QC for almost 20 years, said.

"It was only Mayor Belmonte who was able to solve the traffic problem through road widening projects, demolishing spots for sidewalk vendors, and establishing pedestrian crossing overpasses," said Ryan Bernt, a Pandacan resident for over 30 years. He also mentioned beautification projects, proper garbage collection and the construction of plazas.

Just one government agency employee, who voted for former Quezon City Mayor Ismael Mathay Jr. in the 2004 election, said he would vote for Belmonte's ticket mates now saw "It is time somebody else governs the city," he said.

Another reason Belmonte supporters admitted Belmonte did well is her homages in the city's fourth district. "Belmonte is popular because he gives whatever the barangay asks for," said Ella Mendoza of Barangay Bungad who declined to be quoted.

Belmonte said he was baffled by his popularity among the constituents in all walks of life.

"But I can tell that the 6,0 residents perceive me as a good manager and administrator while the 8,0 find hope in my strength spirit approach," Belmonte told the Inquirer in a text interview.

The mayor said his track record could explain his popularity. During his first three years in office, he launched the anti-corruption task force and the one-stop shop for business permits, which he said are now a model in other cities in the country.

Belmonte said that during his second term, he embarked on a massive infrastructure development program, including the construction of new roads and school buildings. With Jerry Esplanada, Calimpan

QUEZON City Mayor Sonny Belmonte

Nene Aguilar back on campaign trail in Las Piñas

SAMUEL "NENE" AGUILAR, WHO is running for mayor in Las Piñas City, assured residents of Barangay CAA-BF Int'l, the largest barangay in the city, of continuous educational assistance to their children, with the construction of a three-story high school building in the area.

The move is aimed to accommodate more students and provide them secondary level education for free.

Aguilar, who has been mayor of the city in the past, said the construction of 12-classroom school building for high school students is in addition to the Las Piñas National High School, CAA annex along E. Aguilar Ave., and three other high schools in the city.

The construction of the new building will complement an elementary school in the area. Aguilar, who is running unopposed, said, The building is one of several infrastructure projects for the year in compliance with the city government's commitment of continued progress and unhindered delivery of basic services. "I will not allow the momentum of growth and progress in Las Piñas be obstructed for any reason," Aguilar said.

He also cited the giant leap in business, social progress and environmental care as proofs of the city's development over the years.

"These are being enjoyed through vocational, health and day care centers, and expanding the coverage of free hospitalization program, among others, he said.

AGUILAR

Major powers warn Iran of 3rd round of sanctions

LONDON – (WORLD POWER PAIRED) Iran on Wednesday a third round of UN sanctions headed if it defies halt to uranium enrichment work, which the West suspects would be used to build nuclear weapons.

Earlier, Iran underlined its determination to press on with the work when its Ahmadinejad, international affairs adviser to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said Tehran was capable of mass producing machines used for enriching uranium.

"Our day-to-day problem is to produce one centrifuge but right now we have obtained the technology for mass production of centrifuges," Velayati told the Iranian Students News Agency.

It was believed to be the first time a senior aide of Ahmadinejad, who has the final say on nuclear and other policies, has said it could make centrifuges on a large scale.

The sanctions warning followed a meeting in London of senior officials from the five permanent members of the UN Security Council—the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia—plus Germany.

A British Foreign Office statement said the political directors from the six major powers had concluded a negotiated solution was still preferable but that further action would be taken if necessary to get Iran to comply.

"There was strong agreement on the way ahead, reflecting our shared concerns about Iran's non-compliance with the UN nuclear mandate[s] and Security Council requirements and our continued interest in a negotiated solution," said the statement.

Ahmadinejad has defied calls to meet international requirements the Security Council would need to take further action," it said.

Iran says its nuclear program is only for electricity so it can export more of its oil and gas.

The United Nations has already imposed two sets of sanctions on the Islamic Republic since December over its refusal to halt uranium enrichment, which can be used to fuel power reactors or make bombs.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, while suggesting his country in general favored negotiations, said Tehran would not entrust "one iota" from what it sees as its rights to develop its civilian nuclear energy industry.

"The world should know that ... Iran is among those countries who have the industrial (nuclear) fuel cycle," he said a showing around in the central province of Kerman.

Iran said last month it would make nuclear fuel on an industrial scale, a move that would take it closer to developing atomic weapons if it wanted to. Western experts expressed doubt about the economics.

Tehran aims to have 3,000 centrifuges running at its main enrichment plant Natanz by the end of this month. That could be enough to collect uranium for one bomb within a year.

Centrifuges, tubular devices that are easy to calibrate, spin at supersonic speeds to fine fuel for power plants or, if it is enriched to high levels, nuclear explosives.

Diplomats and analysts say Iran has not shown the ability to run centrifuges for long periods without breakdown, the key to producing nuclear fuel, and says it is at least 2-3 years away from making enough enriched uranium for a bomb, if it wants one.

In London, the major powers reiterated strong support for continued dialogue between EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana and Iran's nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani.

The major powers were "trying quite intensely to open up a channel on the nuclear issue" through Solana, who was expected to meet Larijani again next week, UK Undersecretary of State Nicholas Bonsall on Wednesday. Reuters

WANNA BUY A HAT? Comedian Stan Laurel, half of the 1920s slapstick duolitic act Laurel and Hardy, holds his trademark bowler hat. The hat is to be auctioned in New York later this month. Christie's auction house said on May 2. –

Kent State tape said to replay order to fire

KENT, OHIO – AN AUDIO RECORDING OF the shootings 37 years ago at Kent State University includes the voices of Ohio National Guard leaders ordering troops to fire into a crowd of students, according to a man wounded in the shootings, who obtained a copy of the recording.

If confirmed as authentic, the recording could solve the mystery of the shootings on May 4, 1970, which became a defining moment in the protests against the Vietnam War.

Alan Canfora, who was shot in the right wrist, played a copy of the recording at a press conference here on Tuesday.

Through grainy static and the high-pitched calls of protesters, it was possible to faintly hear someone shout "Point!" Canfora said the full command is recorded on the tape with multiple voices shouting "Right here!" "Get 'em! Waste 'em!" "Point!" These words, however, were difficult to discern when he played the recording. A 13-second volley of gunfire follows, during which four students were killed and nine were wounded.

"The evidence speaks for itself," Canfora said. "The voices are right there, very clear. There was no order to fire."

The President's Commission on Campus Unrest, which published its final report on the shootings in October 1970, never addressed whether commanders ordered troops to fire. Based on the newly available recording, Canfora said he would call on Congress, the Justice Department and Ohio's attorney general to open new investigations. AST

WORLDBRIEFS

Chavez takes over foreign-controlled oil projects

SAN FELIPE, VENEZUELA – President Hugo Chavez seized control of the last remaining oil projects in Venezuela controlled by large US and European energy companies on Saturday. The move broke down the projects, announced in January, in the centerpiece of recent actions aimed at consolidating his government's control over Venezuela. Venezuela's control over the oil production projects, which are in the Orinoco region in the country's eastern and north up until most $30 billion, will weaken companies like ExxonMobil, Chevron and ConocoPhillips in one of the world's most promising oil exploration regions. Venezuela is allowing the private companies to remain as minority partners, but the companies are to be in an agreement on compensation for the loss of their assets. AFP

Tempers fray in French presidential debate

PARIS – Right-winger Nicolas Sarkozy and socialist Segolene Royal clashed over their economic policies and their disagreements repeatedly flared into shouted insults. An estimated 20 million viewers were engrossed by the two and half hours of no-holds-barred debate on issues in France's economic and social problems. Yet analysts said neither could claim victory. In the most key outburst, Royal charged Sarkozy with "political immorality" after he said that handicapped children should be guaranteed a place in ordinary schools. AFP

Turkey headed for snap polls in July

ANKARA – A Turkish parliamentary committee Wednesday set July 22 as the date for snap general elections after Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called for politics and calm during crisis over a pro-Islamist presidential aide. The government's bid to reconcile calls for early political day after the Constitutional Court annulled a first round parliamentary vote to name president, to which Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul was the sole candidate last Friday. The AKP-efforts also met opposition protests by the presidency and by women dressed Turkish in the government and the staunchly secularist military in the event of political crisis. Erdogan has been since taking office in March 2003. AFP

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibanez

Olmert faces street protests, angry solons

JERUSALEM—AFTER FACING DOWN A MUTINY from his own party over a scathing Lebanon war report, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert faced a new battle on Thursday with street protests and angry lawmakers.

Opposition leaders in parliament were expected to demand that the prime minister step down during an extraordinary session to discuss the interim government inquiry that blasted Olmert for serious failure in the 34-day war.

Late Thursday, thousands were expected to echo the calls at a rally in Tel Aviv's Rabin Square at the same time public protest after the publication of the damning report.

"This demonstration is an occasion for people to show a vote of no confidence in Ehud Olmert and (Defense Minister) Amir Peretz and tell them that they should step down," warned Gil Dekel, an organizer of the protest, said army radio. Dekel used to serve reserve duty in the...

OLMERT

Olmert has resisted overwhelming pressure to step down after the release of the report on Monday saying it would be irresponsible, and has vowed that his government would work to correct the mistakes uncovered by the inquiry.

On Tuesday the beleaguered premier got a lift on a rebellion within his Kadima party despite a call in parliament by top aide Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and the resignation of the chief of the party's parliamentary bloc.

"The prospect of a putsch within Kadima's ranks has been like a soap bubble, alongside the fact of a substantial mass desertion that could topple Olmert's government," wrote the liberal Haaretz newspaper.

Following a late-night meeting of Kadima's 29 deputies in the Knesset (house), Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres emerged saying Olmert had received "unprecedented support" from the MKs. Only one MK supported Livni's call for Olmert to step down.

"It's true he is failed prime minister, but he is a fairly good politician," wrote the tabloid Maariv.

"His most attentive ears in the State of Israel succeeded, as ears for now, to mobilize his party and coalition and head off—with relative ease—the mutiny that never was," wrote the mass-selling Yedioth Ahronoth.

Livni failed to rally support within Kadima by not backing her call for Olmert to step down with her own resignation, observers said.

"She could have established herself yesterday," wrote Moshe Negbi in Maariv. "Instead she sold out. Big time."

Although the opposition can try and push through a no-confidence vote in Olmert's government at its session on Thursday, the measure is unlikely to pass as the premier will retain the support of his 78-member coalition in the Knesset. AFP

50 countries in bid to rescue Iraq

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, EGYPT—A conference aimed at rescuing Iraq from chaos and bankruptcy kicked off Thursday in Egypt amid an unprecedented display of international unity.

Foreign ministers and top diplomats from more than 50 countries gathered in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh to launch a five-year plan aimed at stabilizing war-torn Iraq.

Participants were on Thursday expected to adopt the International Compact with Iraq (ICI), a five-year plan to stabilize the war-torn country and develop its near-frozen economy.

In his opening remarks, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said he hoped the conference "will herald a new level in Iraq's relations with the outside nations."

He vowed his hope the meeting would yield significant progress on both the economic and security fronts.

Iraqi Finance Minister Bayan Jabr Solagh told AFP before the conference kicked off he expected countries including Saudi Arabia and Egypt to write off about $80 US billion of debt at the meeting.

Iraqi officials also said they hoped the conference would see their neighbors offer a strong commitment to the following their country plagued by a bloody anti-American insurgency and relentless communal bloodletting.

Heading to Egypt, UN Secretary-of-State Condoleezza Rice said the mean area on Iraq's neighbors to show their commitments to ending violence, assuring that their own stability was at stake.

"The most important message that I will be delivering is that a stable, unified and independent Iraq is an Iraq that will be a pillar of stability in the Middle East and an Iraq that is not stable and not an Iraq for all people will be a source of instability for the region," she said.

Complaining a shift in US policy Rice was expected to talk to Syria and Iran, who have been accused by Washington of funding and abetting Iraq's flood of insurgency and Shiite militias respectively.

A possible meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki would mark the first high level bilateral talks since the United States cut relations in 1980. AFP

Prince Harry's Iraq deployment to be delayed

LONDON—PRINCE HARRY'S DEPLOYMENT to Iraq will be delayed for as long as possible so that the rest of the soldiers in his unit can see Iraqi civilians in their surroundings, The Sun tabloid reported in an early edition of its Thursday paper.

Both the Ministry of Defense and a spokesman for the prince declined to comment on the report or details of his deployment.

According to the Sun, which cited an unidentified Army source, Harry will fly out to Iraq after the rest of his unit, who are set to leave for the war-torn country this month.

"If the soldiers all familiar with their new surroundings before Harry arrives, they will be far sharper to the dangers of the roadside bombs," the Sun's source told the daily.

"Getting him out here is no bad thing for the rest of the lads." The head of the British Army said Monday that Harry would serve in Iraq, despite fears that insurgents could target the third in line to the throne.

"I have taken the decision as chief of general staff. It's my decision as chief of general staff. I have full command of everyone in the Army, including Prince Harry," Gen. Sir Richard Dannatt told a news conference.

Dannatt said the decision had been taken after the "utmost possible consultation" but added that he would yet change his mind if circumstances changed.

Harry, second son the Prince Charles and the late Diana, Princess of Wales, will be responsible for 22 soldiers and four Scimitar reconnaissance vehicles.

BRITAIN'S Prince Harry, younger son of Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana, in a March 2006 photo. r

April last been one of the deadliest months for British forces in Iraq since the US-led invasion of March 2003. To date 32 Brits have been lost, including a corporal doing Harry's attested reconnaissance troop leader job.

Were he to serve in Iraq, Harry would become the first British royal to see active service since his uncle Prince Andrew flew helicopters in the 1982 Falklands War with Argentina.

Britain has about 7,100 troops in Iraq most of whom are in Basra and surrounding areas, but the government is planning to withdraw about 1,000 this year. AFP

IT'S NOT YOUR SET, FOLKS! The Faroese sound bridge, landmark of the Baltic island of Faroese, is surrounded by fog on May 2. The bridge, over 963 meters leading from the continent to the island, was finished in 1963 by German architect David Lehmen

Bangkok will be under water in 20 years, climate expert says

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S CAPITAL, BANGKOK, will be under water in 20 years because of rising seas from global warming and subsidence, says a top Thai climate expert who warned of a tsunami years before the 2004 disaster.

"If nothing is done, Bangkok will be at least 50 centimeters to one meter under water," Smith Dharmasaroja, head of Thailand's National Disaster Warning Center, said in an interview.

Bangkok, a sprawling city of more than 10 million people and reinforced by more than 1,000 canals, is between 1 and 1.5 meters (3 to 5 feet) above sea level and is sinking into its soft, heavy soil at an alarming rate, he said this week.

Smith, giving his estimate for Bangkok in 2020, is renowned in Thailand for controversial predictions.

He was dismissed as a crackpot for his tsunami warnings years before the 2004 Indian Ocean disaster which killed 5,395 Thais and foreign tourists on the Andaman Sea coast.

The president, he says, is even fitful.

The city is subsiding at a rate of 10 to 12 inches) per year, partly due to excessive pumping of underground water.

Global warming is causing seas to rise and there is evidence of severe coastal erosion just downstream from Bangkok.

His comments came as scientists and government officials from around the globe are meeting at a UN conference in Bangkok to work out ways to fight climate change and curb the growth of greenhouse gas emissions.

To avert disaster, Smith said, the city needed to construct a massive dyke to protect it from rising seas and increasingly violent storms.

"The system has to be started right now. Otherwise it will be too late to protect our capital city," he said.

As if to highlight the threat from flooding and bad weather, the capital has been hit by an unseasonably early start to the rainy season. Six to seven storms has also caused widespread flooding in parts of southern and eastern Thailand.

Asked what was being done to avert disaster, Smith said:

"The government does not pay any attention at all." Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
- Suns, Spurs book semis showdown

/A31

SPORTS
Editor Tobbysin S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Delos Reyes

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A DYSPHING Lawrence Bunsis (left) of Hanford Barracudares a foul from Dasi's Mark Moreno in yesterday's game.

Beverage Masters clip Whoppers in overtime

By Jeannie W. Paye

[illegible] key baskets in overtime as San Miguel Magnolia slapped a second straight loss on Burger King with a 93-92 decision yesterday in the PBL Unity Cup at the Ultimate College Sports Center.

Chan topscored with 28 points while Villanueva chipped in 16, including two free throws in the last 23.3 seconds that gave the Beverage Masters a 94-89 advantage.

"Everybody accepted their responsibility. There's accountability, so we can now move on to the next level," said coach Koy Banal after the Brgy. Ginebra lieutenant is 2-1.

Earlier, Boobie Dela snapped out of a four-game losing spell with a 28-23 victory over Dasi Sting Drink.

Win Bunsan and Gilbert Malabanan sealed their five throws with only a minute remaining as the Super Suckers dealt the Mikkies Specialties Dog Food's straight defeat.

Both squads remained at the ceiling with 1-0 clubs, but Dasi coach Caloy Garcia said his squad's first win could serve as a springboard in the next round.

"I hope this is the start of a good run for us," said Garcia.

Burger King forced the extra period at 82-all as Bonjay Sumale sank two free throws with no time left in regulation off a lead by Gerard Jones.

Albert Dapalo's scrub Jones gives San Miguel-Magnolia a three-point cushion earlier but failed to complete a three-point play.

The scores

First Game

MIKKIES, 28TH 28—Mike Ti. Bunsis 13, Malabanan 10, Rosa 7, Lanes 0, Dasch Gallan 0, protocol Abel 2, Mikkies 2, Wagner 0, Mikkies 0, Bowl 0.

DASI, 23 23—Ardilla 10, J. Rodriguez 5, Laroya 0, Apo 0, Arcilla 0, Cuesta 0, Salvador 0, Sagmanda 4, Aguinaldo 4, Bunsan 2, Bowl 0, L. Rodriguez 0, Calvaguin 0, Crisostomo 0.

Quarters: 10-21, 24-42, 48-48, 28-23

Second Game

MAGNOLIA, 94—Chan 28, Villanueva 16, Magpayo 12, Cuanan 10, Sumbon 11, Custodio 0, Jones 12, Angeles 3, Mendoza 3, Dalisay 2, Jamandre 2.

BURGER KING, 92—Kenneth 24, Bravo 17, Dalmacio 13, Ira Salvador 12, Santos 4, Mendoza 10, Tan, Villegas 3, Sagmanda 2, Abdulmalik, Aquino 4, Hermosura 0, Santos 4)

Quarters: 21-13, 45-35, (44-44), 82-82 (reg), 94-92

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Tiger, Lions in clash of champs

COLLEGIATE CHAMPIONS CLASH AS DLSAU (Mitchelle Universe) of Senior Tiaisse and NCAA runners San Beda fight for the early lead in the Blood Flying V Pro Summer Invitational Cup today at The Arrieta Sun Area.

The Tigers will be shooting for their second victory in the 6 pcs, nightcap after winning by defeats over Perpetual Help last Wednesday.

The Lions will also be for their second win in three games after beating the Mahindra University in an 84-78 decision two days ago.

Jose Rizal University and Mapua quiche their second straight triumph when they clash in the nationalized season.

Philippine Christian U takes on the defending University of the Philippines at 2 p.m. while the two aims to seal its undefeated status.

The JRU Bombers pulled off a 61-57 win over the PU Bulldogs with Jesse Mercado and Marvin Hayes paving a balanced charge to the finales opener while the Cardinals outlasted the Maroon Eagles in double overtime, 86-80, Wednesday.

The Eagles suffer absorbed a 71-66 loss to La Salle on love in the opener. Antonio M. Ryan

Jockey Ladiana gets 3 weeks

By Herang R. Castillo

JOCKEY JEFFREY LADIANA HAS BEEN SUSpended for three weeks by the Philippine Racing Commission for an infraction placed Empire King during the Imperial Stakes Series two weeks ago.

Ladiana was penalized when he moved Empire King into the path of Soul Spicy in the final turn without being in hand two lengths ahead," said former jockey and now Philracom commissioner Rolando Gramaje Jr. yesterday.

Gramaje handed the award that accompanied the speaker which drew a public outcry following the loss of Soul Spicy last week's Derby of the Year. He also said that the first time Soul Spicy won the race one victory by Empire King in the first race was "allowable" under riding rules.

Longshot Stop Talking, an imported mare from Australia, won the race under Jessie B. Guce with Empire King second and Real Spicy third.

Phoenix Equestrian, Soul Spicy's owner, blasted the board of stewards for not being able to protect the interest of the betting public.

Red Bull takes on TNT today

RED BULL TRIES TO STAY CLOSE behind Strategic Alumbres when the defending champion Bulls clash with last Talk 'N Text today in the PBA Fiesta Cup at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

Ted Tan scored with 9:22.1 10 left, a full game behind the streaking Sta. Kings, the Bulls sank a win in the 7:20 p.m. game to stay within range of an unbeaten semifinal seed.

Ennie Villanueva will continue today for the Bulls until next week before he goes on national duty for the 15th-SEA Club Championship seven Tehran Iran.

Talk N Text goes into the contest with a three-game winning streak and could prove to be more than a handful for the Bulls.

Meanwhile, Purefoods' lampoon semi-wanted after the Commissioner's Office yesterday suspended import Marquis Chandler for one game and fined him P20,000 for swearing two technical fouls against Red Bull last April 22.

Chandler came into physical contact with referee Ted Quilinguen while disputing a call late in the second quarter. The Tender Juicy Giants, who will managed to win despite that handicap, will concede a depleted all-90-plus center against Coca-Cola tie-up 4:30 p.m. game.

The load will again fall on the shoulders of Asaya Yap, who hoisted out the rookie in that game with 30 points, and scrubby Peter June Simon.

Jeff Weaver, Coca-Colo's sole import, still has to score a win in two games but the Tigers will now come into their game with the Giants the solid favorites to win for the last time in five games.

John Arigo, Ali Peek, Alex Cabagnot and Kenneth Duremdes are expected to lead Coca-Cola, which opened the tournament with three straight wins but has gone 1-2 since.

James Yap will lead Red Bull, while JJ Sullivan will be the backbone of TNT. Willie Miranda has also been a key factor in the Tigers' resurgence.

GINEBRA'S Eggie Echeves (right) shoots a shot-off Philacol's Jay-R Reyes as hard teammates Andy Seigle (left) ace recent game. ANACLETO JOSE

Boom Boom 2-1 fave over Argentinian

By Salvee Lagumbay
Contributor

BAUTISTA

LAC PINAL MENDOZA —Endorsed by "Boom Boom" Bautista has been installed 2-1 favorite to subdue the first defense of his Argentinian foreign Manuel Medina when they clash here Saturday in the first scheduled portion of the pay-per-view "The World Series."

Bautista was picked to a minus-200 favorite to defeat Medina, while Medina is a plus-160 underdog going into the fight, according to 4Winds Sportsbook yesterday.

Bautista promises a $200K for an Bautista win while $100 while a $100 bet on Medina will earn $160.

"This early season start Boomie has already made inroads into the American boxing fans' consciousness, and that's a good development," Kinamon Gatilo, son, Bautista's manager, said when asked for comment.

Meanwhile, MEG-CBN will air the title story of Bautista's rise from poverty in Candijay Bohol, in a special episode on its program "Mandaluta Ko Inoy" tonight. The show is hosted by Cherry Santos-Lim Ortaliz.

"His hopes in an overnight home, a simple boy to Candijay" said Bautista's chief handler Antonio L. Aldeguer in a separate interview. "And now he is already in boxing's center stage in Las Vegas. That's quite an accomplishment for the boy."

If Bautista's opponent could be listed up to challenge MBC super bantam champ Daniel Wares De Leon late this year in a headliner in the "Boxing World Cup" in Cebu which will feature at least four world title bouts in one night.

Ranks of Pinoy SEA Games champs decimated

By Jane Navarro

ALMOST HALF OF THE FILIPINO GOLD AND SILVER candidates during the previous Southeast Asian Games will be missing in the Thailand duo.

Mark Joseph, deputy secretary general of the Philippine Olympic Committee, yesterday said 20 percent of the country's 202 medal winners two years ago there either retired or have been injured.

Among 10 more former SEAG winners were left out of the Thailand Games after 28 events were stricken off the list of disciplines.

Joseph said the SEAG Task Force learned of the decision to cut off champions in the course of its consultation with the national sports associations which are sending athletes to the biennial competitions.

"Of the 40 NSAs, the Task Force has already consulted 26," said Joseph. "We will wrap up the consultations with the 13 other NSAs in about a week's time."

From categories re-traditional from racing, skate to soccer, Joseph said a couple of events in diving and billiards, apart from several other events on weight categories in rowing, shooting, bodybuilding, boxing and wrestling will not be on the 24th SEAG menu.

"We are trying to discover the plans of Thailand on how to stream it," said Joseph, who represents the POC in the SEAG Task Force taking with committee head Ashan Ghazi and deputy Nancy Kilayko.

"We were glads to the 24 events that were excluded from the roster eleven for Thailand SEAG," said Joseph.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be advised that Michael "Mike" Yabut (whose latest available photo appears below) is no longer connected with Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation ("PSPC"). Accordingly, Mr. Yabut 's authority to transact, negotiate and deal on behalf of PSPC has been revoked.

Should you be contacted by Mr. Yabut, we would appreciate if you could immediately report the matter to the Security Manager at the following Telephone no. 816-6501 extension No. 6859.

Nat'l wushu meet gets under way

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PHOENIX Suns' Raja Bell (left), Amare Stoudemire (center) and Steve Nash congratulate each other late in the fourth quarter against the Los Angeles Lakers.

Suns, Spurs book semis showdown

NEW YORK—THE PHOENIX SUNS ELIMINATED the Los Angeles Lakers from the playoffs with a 111-108 home win in Game Five of their Western Conference best-of-seven series on Wednesday.

The Suns advanced to the semifinals and a meeting with the San Antonio Spurs, who ousted a 4-1 series victory over the Denver Nuggets. Game One is in Phoenix on Sunday.

"We've playing solid basketball," said Amare Stoudemire, who had 27 points and 10 rebounds.

"The way we're playing now, we've got a chance to beat pretty much any team. But there's no bold predictions for the end it could because the Spurs are a heck of a team."

The Suns, who got 37 points and 10 assists from Steve Nash and 26 points from Shawn Marion, moved to a 15-point lead in the second quarter and were up 78-64 until 6:34 left in the game.

The Lakers scored the next seven points and eventually came within the points of the Suns before Stoudemire made five free throws and a jumpshot in the final three minutes.

It was the second straight season the Suns have eliminated Los Lakers from the playoffs. Last season they did it by tallying from a 1-1 deficit.

Kobe Bryant scored 34 points for the Lakers and Lamar Odom had 21 and 10 rebounds.

"Personally for me, it's bittersweet. It was unfun," said Bryant, who has won an NBA championship in 2001.

"There years and still losing at ground zero. This summer's a big summer. We have to see what direction we want to take this organization. Maybe closer some and make a new start."

Jason Kidd of Nash played despite being up the previous night at hospital with his wife, who delivered a baby boy.

Kidd had eight points and three assists in 40 minutes of playing time.

Michael Finley for a franchise record eight three-pointers and scored 29 points as the San Antonio Spurs eliminated the Denver Nuggets in five games with a 93-79 win.

Tim Duncan added 22 points, 12 rebounds and five assists.

Carmelo Anthony and Allen Iverson each scored 21 points for the Nuggets but had an offnight shooting—Anthony went 8-of-20 and Iverson 6-of-22.

MINETORY (Basketball TV)

10:30 a.m.—Cuba vs United Arab

Ray named Rookie of the Year

NEW YORK—PORTS AND TRUE ALLYS'S GUARD BRANDON Roy was named the National Basketball Association's Rookie of the Year Wednesday, to fulfilling a dream of Wednesday. Roy was the

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MAYWEATHER Jr. (right) and Oscar La Hoya face off Wednesday.

Floyd Jr., Oscar trade verbal jabs

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—UNBEATEN Floyd Mayweather guaranteed victory while Oscar de la Hoya promised to be faster and more aggressive in their final public confrontation before Saturday's super-welterweight showdown.

Trading their final verbal jabs at a news conference here Wednesday, the 10 fighters kept to their prefight roles with Mayweather teasing, cutty and outspoken De la Hoya in a face-to-face showdown.

"I said, I'm not worried about you," I said. I'm not trying the truth," Mayweather said. "He's nervous. I see it in his eyes. The eyes tell it all. He is going to be a little shakey. He is nervous.

"I will dominate him. Don't be surprised if I stop him. He is a quitter. I've never given up. This

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Valencia rips Iloilo

POTOSI, ILOILO—THE VA-lencia Golden Harvest finished a balanced offense to repeat-own the Bicolo Ocolo Warriors, 78-76, in the 2007 Spring Cooking Oil MBC Hometel Cup at the sports complex here.

The Golden Harvest of Bicolo-ano-Isabel-ic-It spotted a 12-point opened and never re-wayed as the Warriors failed to in last-ditch rally.

Romeo Bicolo of the Star Bubay Bicans scored 16 points to lead four Valencia players in double-figures.

The Warriors of homecomers Robert Ty cut the double-digit deficit to just five, 43-38, at the turn but the golden harvest increased a 13-0 burst as the warriors of the second half to pull away.

The Warriors supported by Blaze Arry Trobo and the Iloilo Basketball League dropped to 3-3.

The PBC Under of this Week is being aired 6:30 pm every Friday over at Basketball TV Courage updates can be accessed at www.basketballpippers.com.

The scores:

VALENCIA 78—Romeo H. Bicolo 16, Cesar J. Calamiga 11, Dingwell ...

WARRIORS 73—Willie L. Ebdel 4, Albert S. Ebdel ...

ILOILO 76—Angus G. Cleto 10, Ronald S. Kindler 6, Jeremiah Bicolo 6, Lawrie L. Samaco 8, Dave L. Pena 8, ... (rest)

Quarters: 20-12, 43-38, 63-52, 78-76.

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A NEW FUEL BENCHMARK

Petron introduces breakthrough fuel

By Raquel P. Gomez

MARKET LEADER and fuel innovator Petron recently introduced XCS Complete Combustion System, a breakthrough fuel technology customized for Philippine driving conditions and the first gasoline powered by organic combustion enhancers that give the engine a cleaner burn and optimized power.

The pioneering product from Petron will again set a standard for other local gasoline producers to aspire for according to Petron president Khalid Al-Buloushi. "The new Petron XCS is designed for the 21st century. It features a premium-organic additive, a proprietary formulation developed exclusively for Petron that makes the engine maximize its power and become fuel efficient. We believe that the new XCS will again set a benchmark for local gasoline products."

Petron pioneered the "cleaning action" additive for carbonator systems with the introduction of the first XCS in 1996. In 2000, with the shift to unleaded gasoline and fuel injection engine systems, Petron introduced XCS Plus with the anti-valve seat recession and engine-protection additives to address the need of leaded gasoline users who were hesitant to switch to unleaded fuel for fear of engine damage.

AL-FADDAGH

CAMPOS

PANGILINAN

TOLEDO

DEL ROSARIO

The Chief Executive Petron XCS, according to Jose Campos, Petron vice president for marketing, features the organic combustion enhancers or fuel organic additives that work on the entire fuel system of the vehicle to bring out various performance benefits such as more power, fuel economy and clean exhaust emissions.

Campos said the new Petron XCS is a complete new formulation that answers the current vehicle market demands and environmental concerns. He said Petron embarked on a thorough five-year research and development to come up with a new gasoline that will respond well to the requirements of new engine technologies, tropical driving conditions and the social and environmental demands.

"There is a big demand not only for fuel efficiency, but for less maintenance of vehicles. With a growing concern for climate change, there is demand as well for environment-friendly fuels," said Campos.

The new Petron XCS is the result of Petron's strong partnership with Innospec, a global specialty chemicals company and the largest dedicated fuel additives specialist in the world with over USD900 million operation on fuel specialties alone.

Milton Higuchi-Sousa, Innospec business director for fuel specialties in Asia Pacific, said the new additives technology blended in to the new Petron gasoline will contribute to a cleaner environment in terms of reduced pollutants coming out of the exhaust of engines.

"We've done a lot of work in the past few years and taken measures to demonstrate that hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide are reduced as a result of the cleaning effect of the additives in the fuel delivery system and in the engine itself. The new gasoline is good to the environment and at the same time gives an engine performance needed in such difficult driving conditions such as the Philippines."

Petron's technical services general manager Willie Toledo added, "Being a local company has its advantages. Because we are totally focused on the Philippine market, we can recommend our fuels to the special needs of Filipino motorists. We are also formulator fuels which best fit local conditions such as heat, dust, driving habits, and engine types."

Based on the tests conducted on the new Petron XCS, the power of the new gasoline provides the engine a about 2 to 23 percent higher compared with the power given by other competing brands, according to Toledo. He added that a six percent fuel savings can be achieved with the new Petron XCS.

The new Petron XCS has been formulated to keep the engine running clean to design conditions that many manufacturers promise the new vehicle owner, according to Papachristos. He added that the new gasoline, with its very effective cleaning properties, can also be advantageous to older vehicles.

"The fuel is designed to give an almost instantaneous cleanup or removal of deposits from the engine so it means that the engine becomes more responsive to acceleration. It's running closer to design conditions so that even people who are using old cars will soon feel

Unleash true engine power with the new Petron XCS

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COMPLETE COMBUSTION SYSTEM

THE NEW Petron XCS Complete Combustion System unleashes true engine power by providing the following performance benefits:

• Excellent detergency cleans up engine deposits quickly and maintains engine cleanliness.

The new Petron XCS is effective in cleaning up intake deposits in older vehicles, as well as fuel jet injector deposits in newer engines. In addition to providing protection against formation of intake valve deposits, the detergent additive also removes existing deposits, which results in improved power and fuel economy.

A complex combination of additive chemistries promotes better fuel consumption.

The new Petron XCS reconfigures the fuel to promote better atomization resulting in more efficient combustion. Performance tests among competitors' fuels show that the new XCS delivers 9 to 23 percent reduction in fuel consumption in both city and highway driving.

Better combustion enables the engine to reach at maximum power.

The latest additive present in the new XCS offers the benefit of more efficient combustion and reduced emissions. It burns longer with more uniformity, and produces more energy to maximize engine power. Removes and prevents of deposits from the fuel system also enables the engine to produce maximum power output.

95-RON fuel ensures better driveability and smoother acceleration.

The new XCS is a 95-RON fuel and meets the octane rating requirements of most modern vehicles. It resists engine knock and provides optimum performance in acceleration performance.

Designed to cater to all types of vehicles, the new Petron XCS Complete Combustion System ensures that your vehicle get as close to complete combustion of fuel the minute you start the engine. With a complete combustion of fuel, you get maximum power out of your car's engine because all that chemical energy is converted to useful power.

The results of the organic combusting enhancers in the new Petron XCS is that they do not contain any metal. They're based on carbon, hydrogen and oxygen and when they go to the combustion chamber of the engine, they combust cleanly—absolutely leaving behind no metallic residue that can harm the environment.

Next gen road warriors use the new Petron XCS

Meet the new faces of the dynamic car race world Tyson Sy, Mark Bumgarner, Matteo Guidicelli. Young, totally driven, and hungry for top speeds, these champs and new heroes of the road optimize to the max the power of their powerful vehicles with the new Petron XCS.

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WB guarantees RP infra thrust

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Auditing firm sees PSEi hitting 4,000 in '07** /B3

■ **Gov't set to borrow P325.6B next year** /B5

By Michelle V. Rorra

THE PHILIPPINES HAS RECEIVED A COMMITMENT FROM THE World Bank to provide either loans or guarantees for private sector firms that will invest in priority infrastructure projects as identified by the government.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said that the World Bank has expressed its intention to help the country push through with its infrastructure projects during the 2007 World Bank Spring Meetings held in Washington last month.

"The World Bank has broached the idea of

WB GUARANTEES /B2

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Shares close flat

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Mining sector expects to hit paydirt, cites $1-B prospects

2 firms strike gold in Abra, Compostela

By Bernard W. Dominguez

THE LOCAL MINING INDUSTRY has shined in Asia as international conference in Subic through on the promotion of Philippine mineral prospects, as two more firms announced the discovery of gold deposits in Abra and Compostela Valley.

"From June 5 to 7, we are holding a conference with the theme Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Reformation of Mining Investments," said Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez, president of the Chamber of Mines. "We expect leaders of the global industry to grace the gathering."

In a statement, Canadian firm Ian Atkinson Gold Corp. said it had confirmed a significant discovery known as the Cabos Copper-Gold Porphyry Target in Compostela Valley Municipalities.

"Describing the find as a 'tremendously exciting target,' company president Ian Taylor said the Cabos prospect was the first new discovery of its type in the region for 20 years.

"Without doubt, this is a significant discovery by the company [demonstrating] the mineral potential and development opportunities in this part of San Mateo Area," Taylor said.

Also, Canadian miner Olympus Gold & Minerals Inc. said its drilling activities in the Capcapo area of Abra revealed a mineralized zone stretching from the surface to a depth of 50 meters.

The zone yielded an average of 1.48 grams of gold per ton of ore, 0.16 percent copper and 0.6 grams of silver.

Roger Cabbs, company vice president, said the firm took on the project due to the characteristics the area shared with the Baguio gold-mining district.

ROMUALDEZ

WB guarantees RP infra thrust

Saying a mechanism by which it can help attract investments," Tesoro said in a briefing yesterday. "With a guarantee, investors will be assured of a stream of income."

Tesoro said that the World Bank will offer to investors either loans through the International Finance Corp. (IFC) or guarantees on their investments in different private projects.

IFC is an unit of the World Bank that promotes loans to the private sector.

Tesoro said the government has 18 priority infrastructure projects with a combined investment cost of P811 billion.

Of these projects, the most costly is the P56.3-billion construction of the Light Rail Transit Line 4, which will extend the existing Line 1 (which starts from Baclaran) to the cities of Marikina to Las Piñas, and the refinancing/restructuring of the Manila Light Rail Transit Line 3 (MRT-3).

The second biggest project is the extension of the North Luzon Expressway valued at nearly P39.4 billion. The project includes the construction of an 84.2-kilometer road, 12 interchanges and toll collection facilities, and two bridges crossing the Agno and Bued Rivers.

The other projects are the Bicol Emergency Power Restoration work, the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway, the Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway, the Pagbilao 3rd Power Project, the Iloilo-Guimaras Interisland Bridge, the Iloilo-Negros (IMN) Transmission Line project, Line 1 North Extension, Dumlao-Bauko-Bontoc-Lubuagan-Quirino Highway Rehabilitation, and, the Agno River Integrated Irrigation.

Tesoro described the projects as "ready to go" because they no longer have right-of-way issues and have been endorsed by the Investment Coordination Committee.

Tesoro said the projects are part of the government's medium-term Philippine development plan. Being so, the government is legally allowed to provide subsidies to willing investors.

But he said the government, which is trying to reduce its budget deficit, prefers unsolicited agreements with the World Bank to extend loans and guarantees to investors rather than shoulder subsidies as its own.

Shares close flat

From page B1

3.14 points to 3,077.56.

Gainers and losers were even at 48 each, with 41 stocks unchanged. Turnover was 5.8 billion shares worth P5.19 billion (P0.171 million).

PLDT closed unchanged at P3,540, while Globe Telecom fell P3.00 to P1,215.

Gainers included SM Prime Holdings, which advanced 25 centavos to P11.75, and Jollibee, up P2 to P52.50. Ayala Corp. edged up P5 to P600.

San Miguel A was down 50 centavos to P64 and San Miguel B was steady at P72.

From page B1

Tesoro said the government is willing to provide guarantees to investors in the form of "take-or-pay" contracts, wherein the government will pay the investor a fixed amount of income regardless of the project's performance.

He said the government is also willing to provide guarantees to investors in the form of "take-or-pay" contracts, wherein the government will pay the investor a fixed amount of income regardless of the project's performance.

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(in million Pesos)

Stocks	Open	High	Low	Close	Volume
A					
A. Soriano Corporation					
Abacore Capital Holdings Inc.					
Abaca Resources Holdings					
Abacus Consolidated Holdings					
Abaya Holdings					
Abra Mining & Industrial					
Acesite (Philippines) Hotel					
Adams Properties					
Adobe Capital					
Advance Agro Holdings					
Aboitiz Equity Ventures					
Aboitiz Power					
Alaska Milk					
Alcorn Gold Resources					
Alcorn Petroleum & Minerals					
Alcorn Petroleum & Minerals Rights					
Alcorn Petroleum & Minerals Warrants					
Alcorn Petroleum & Minerals Warrants					
Alcorn Petroleum & Minerals Warrants

Auditing firm sees PSEi hitting 4,000 in 2007

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE INDEX (PSEi) is likely to spike to 4,000 this year, buoyed by renewed calls for the market, a strong peso, surging property sector and record low interest rates, said auditing firm Punongbayan and Araullo (P&A).

Following a property forum yesterday organized by the "Be Property Person Philo. and P&A, P&A head of corporate finance Antonio Bethoven said the index may breach 3,400 in the next one to three months.

"If it breaks 3,447, the minimum level of the index's 4,000 this year," Bethoven said.

Bethoven noted that this target appeared to be at the conservative end of other brokers' more optimistic estimates of 3,800 to 10,000 by the end of the year.

Property companies are also likely to take on their bullish trend this year as these companies raise new funds for projects to drive up earnings.

"The one story after inhou is property due to affordable property for the emerging middle market, affordable financing, property plays with a relating angle and owner real estate is no position as the new firewall for China, Korea and Japan," Bethoven said in his presentation yesterday.

Investors are also closely watching possible risks to the market's bull run, which include the fate of the US and Chinese economies and how China would affect global financial markets.

Bethoven said that with regard to the May national elections, stock market investors have anticipated a peaceful conduct of the polls.

Bethoven earlier said he was bullish on tourism and resort projects, retirement homes and villages, and malls like "The Fort" in Makati and "Bacoodbak" in Olongapo, which affirm what he dubbed as the "farm plus-retirement" supporting the Philippine economy.

He explained that the Philippines as a farm has been a breeding ground for "knowledge-based workers" and is further characterized by the emergence of a middle class market.

The Philippines as a farm is also fueled by remittance income with growth of the economy also driven by consumer spending.

As a "farm", the Philippine economy has also shifted to the services sector from manufacturing to further fuel its growth, Bethoven said.

Businesses that cater to the "farm market" are those involved in food food, strip malls and hangar (flea markets), pre-paid cards, schools, nursing schools and diverse degree courses, to name a few.

INSULAR LIFE

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure	
unit values as of:	
April 30, 2007	April 27, 2007
Fixed Income Fund	1.171319	1.171170
Balanced Fund	1.410765	1.410404
Equity Fund	1.641469	1.641139

Court approves PETPlans' rehabilitation program

THE MAKATI REgional trial court yesterday gave pre-need firm, PETPlans Inc. the go-ahead to proceed with its rehabilitation plans.

PETPlans said yesterday in a press release that under its approved rehabilitation plan, all preneed contracts will be replaced with shares in a unified trust fund called the "Enhanced Value Plan" (EVP).

PETPlans' unified trust fund will be solely and independently managed by a competent, experienced and professional fund manager, the company said.

The trust fund is now worth more P1.04 billion, up from P1.0 billion when PETPlans filed for rehabilitation in June last year.

Since PETPlans maintains a trust fund for each type of pre-need plan, it has issued —education-al, pension and life —the value of a pre-need plan will be equivalent to a percentage or proportion, as chosen by the value of the particular trust fund created for it.

For example, the educational plan holders shall not share in the trust fund of the life plan nor the pension plan.

While the value of each plan will be computed in that way, the approved rehabilitation plan also provides that the three trust funds shall become one unified trust fund so it will realize income profits and save on administrative costs. The combined liquidity of the three trust funds shall also improve the capability of the unified trust fund to pay the benefits due the plan holders, the company said.

PETPlans president Lorenzo T. Gozmpo said the approved plan has several advantages for plan holders.

"Unlike ordinary pre-need plans, the EVP will not lapse, but no pre-set installments and it is up to plan holders to pay in additional amounts as necessary," he said.

PETPlans has stopped operating as a pre-need company because of "unbearable cash shortages." (Philippine Star)

PRULINK — PRU LIFE UK

Investments of Portfolio	Current Value May 31, 2007	Last Value Apr. 30, 2007
Money Fund - Peso	1.81789	1.81680
Managed Fund - Peso	1.37446	1.37380
Bond Fund - Peso	1.17156	1.17090
Growth Fund - Peso	1.77156	1.76280
Money Fund - US Dollar	1.0000	1.0000

Robinsons Bank Peso Time Deposit

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3 years	5.5%
1 year	5.0%

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Foreman	
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Global warming and agriculture

By Erniecia M. Ordoñez

IN THE PAST WEEK, WE EXPERIENCED unusually high temperatures. As the earth continues to warm, the climate will change in ways that may seriously disrupt our lives unless we immediately change some of our practices.

The Union of Concerned Scientists states: "Among the most serious consequences of global warming are a faster rise in sea levels; more heat waves and droughts; more intense weather events producing floods and property destruction; a greater potential for heat-related illnesses and deaths; and the wider spread of infectious diseases carried by insects and rodents in areas previously free from them."

The chart above from the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows the global warming effects on agriculture.

Disastrous impact

Findings on staple food crops from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) indicate that for every 1°C increase in the tropics, yields decrease by as much as 10 percent.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a team of scientists that advises governments, estimates that the average global temperature in the tropics would climb by as much as 3°C by 2100.

The Independent Science Panel (ISP), a group of scientists from many disciplines, states: "There is now a consensus among experts in the field that, over the 21st century, the most temperature of the earth will rise by no less than 3°C and possibly by as much as 11.4°C." This means a decrease of as much as 20-30 percent in crop yields. With an increase in population of 2.3 percent a year in the Philippines, the results are disastrous.

The Hadley Centre in the United Kingdom estimates that the rise might be as much as 9°C. This is because it took 100,000 years for the earth to warm 5°C. Now, it took only 100 years to warm 0.6°C.

COMMENTARY

Changes in regions

The Hadley Centre also estimates that for sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia, crop yields could fall by 30 percent by the 2080s. Australia and New Zealand could lose 10 percent of their wheat production by 2030.

Changes in regions are caused by global warming.

This factor is very important because it is an example of a harmful cycle that worsens and strengthens itself. It rises in the earth's temperature causes drought or experience. For example, the loss of rain forests that hold water and carbon. This leads to a rise in temperature, which changes the vegetation even further.

Cynthia Rosenzweig and Daniel Hillel, in their report on "The Potential Impact of Climate Change in Agriculture and Food Supply," said studies found that vulnerability to climate change was greater in developing countries, which are located in warmer latitudes.

Recommendation

Having realized the imminent threat posed by global warming, the areas doing tools to take on solutions to attitude and overuse with our current practices. Instead, there should be a systematic study of what is to come, then launch a nationwide program led by the government to prevent or minimize the global warming impact.

A part of this program is to shift from conventional way to sustainable agriculture. Conventional agriculture degrades the soil by heating it bare, breaking up its structure, promoting aggregation, and killing its worms plant residues. This has contributed to the atmospheric increase in carbon dioxide, methane,

GLOBAL | B5

Shimao still keen on investing $2B in Taguig project

Open to competitive bidding

By Buenaventura C. Dumlao

REAL ESTATE GIANT SHIMAO in Shimao group of China is willing to go through a competitive bidding process for its planned project in the Bonifacio Global City and it prefers to do it alone than tie up with a local partner, Washington Sycip Park, it said yesterday.

Also yesterday, the Bases Conversion Development Authority said China's Shimao group had reaffirmed its commitment to invest $2 billion in Taguig.

In a briefing, Perla said he had advised the Shimao group about the law that prohibited the BCDA from directly entering a deal with a private sector group without a competitive bidding.

"The easiest way for the Chinese [was] would be to tie up with [the] Bonifacio Development Corp.," he said.

However, Perla said, Shimao seemed a piece of property that the BCDA owned, and it had a preference to bid for a contract on its own.

"Shimao chair Hui Wing Mau [himself] reiterated his serious and firm interest [in such investment] during a recent meeting with BCDA officials in Hong Kong," said Nestor L. Mapa, BCDA president and chief executive.

Mapa said the firm property that Shimao wanted to develop was a 7.4-hectare lot where high-end hotels, condominiums, offices and commercial complex would rise.

"Shimao is a world-class, but passed developer that could launch a 600-room main tower luxury hotel in 18 months, as what they did with the Hyatt Hotel in the

SHIMAO | B3

If you think about it

It's as spacious as an SUV. Sleek as a sedan.

Peaceful driving with the noise reduction system feature.

Pack an entire family's luggage and throw in a golf set.

Travel in complete comfort and style.

Optra Wagon

Worry-free driving with disc brakes on all 4 corners.

Drive with precision and convenience.

From hotel to grocery, it looks sophisticated.

It's the only one in its class.

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The Chevrolet Optra Wagon.

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Enjoy the luxury of a sedan and the versatility of an SUV with the Chevrolet Optra Wagon. It has a 1.6 DOHC, E-Tec II 4 cylinder engine that delivers increased performance. The Optra Wagon's 60:40 split folding rear backseat allows more than enough room, even for your furniture. It's sleek, sophisticated and most of all, saves you money. The Chevrolet Optra Wagon is the lowest-priced wagon you can buy, for only P863,000 (manual transmission).

CHEVROLET

Yehey! plans to go public this year

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PHILIPPINE SEVEN CORPORATION (Yehey! Corp. of holding firm Philippine Seven Corp. is going public this year but through a reverse merger transaction involved, ruled "Yehey by introduction."

Philippine president Edmundo Bunyi Jr. said there was no plan of going public as mentioned earlier by the Philippine Stock Exchange and capitalization from Bunyi Group Investments Corp.

Listing by introduction allows a company to be a member of the stock exchange without going through an initial public offering (IPO). It is for companies that do not need to raise additional capital immediately and which have a widely dispersed ownership of their shares.

Bunyi said Masagana held 99 percent of Yehey! while the remaining 1 percent was with minority shareholders.

To pave the way for Yehey!'s listing, Bunyi said in a disclosure it would declare a 15-percent property dividend amounting to P60.47 million to shareholders of record as of May 14, 2007. The is payable to the form of common shares of Yehey!

The property dividend will be taken from the company's unrestricted earnings worth P1.25 billion as of Dec. 31.

The move is in keeping with plans to bring Yehey! public by diversifying Yehey!'s ownership to qualify for the listing by introduction.

After the dividend payout, Masagana will reduce its holdings to 63 percent in Yehey! while Masagana shareholders will hold 30 percent, Bunyi said.

"The intention of an IPO is to raise money. In the case of Yehey!, the requirement is not urgent. Yehey! is well-capitalized to fund its operations," Bunyi said.

He said the planned listing would pave the way for capital building measures to be undertaken in the future.

Bunyi also dispelled rumors that Yehey! was not pursuing an IPO because it could not meet the profitability requirements of the exchange.

He said that last year, Yehey! posted profit in the fourth quarter although the full-year financial report still showed losses. Actual figures, however, were still unavailable as of yesterday.

"The losses in the past stemmed from the slow growth in market acceptance of the Internet as a marketing medium. However, Yehey! has repositioned itself from just being a media to become more online marketing company with an expanded business scope," Bunyi said.

Gov't set to borrow ₱325.6B next year

The bulk to come from domestic sources

By Michelle V. Rivera

ALTHOUGH IT EXPECTS TO post a balanced budget next year, the government will still borrow P325.57 billion from creditors and government securities to sustain next year to pay maturing debts.

Of the amount, P228.04 billion is expected to come from domestic sources through sale of treasury bills and bonds. About P97.5 billion (or $1.99 billion) will be raised through global bonds floatation or official development assistance.

The government's biggest source of ODA are the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Asian Development Bank and World Bank.

This year's borrowing requirements were set at $2.486 billion in foreign loans and P266 billion in domestic loans.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the government would be able to borrow less next year, as it was expected to finally start posting a balanced budget.

Teves said the government was bent on keeping the budget deficit this year within the ceiling of P60 billion and balancing the budget by 2008 despite shortfalls in tax collection in the first quarter of this year.

Atlas, creditor OK debt conversion deal

INVESTMENT FIND CONCEPT Asian Special Opportunities Bird Isle (Liscop) said it had agreed to convert P604.57 million or $11.07 million in receivables from Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. into shares in the mining firm as part of a debt restructuring agreement.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Liscop said it would exercise its conversion option under a debt restructuring agreement (DRA) executed with Atlas in May 2006.

The DRA allowed Liscop to restructure the terms by which it has would repay its P604.6 million debt.

Under the DRA, Liscop has the option to convert such debt into 60.457 million shares of the consolidated mining firm.

Atlas closed at P1.8 a share yesterday.

Atlas' board also approved the conversion and the subsequent issuance of shares to Liscop, citing to be completed by the end of the month. Elizabeth S. Lacson

Insular Life premium income up 157% in Q1

INSULAR LIFE POSTED A 157-percent increase in first year premium income in the first quarter to P605 million from year-ago's P235 million.

Total premium for the quarter hit to P2 billion, up by 35 percent from P1.5 billion in 2006.

In a statement, the company said that was prime by driven by the strong demand for its unit-linked product, as well as for its limited-pay plans.

"We are the market pathfinder for (benefit) protection evolving. The market today is very responsive to investment-linked life insurance products," said Insular Life's chair and CEO Vicente R. Ayllon.

Gross investment income in the first quarter rose 22% up by 22 percent from P604.1 million in 2006 to P763.4 million.

Shimao still keen ...

From page B4

found in Shanghai," he said.

MOA chair Akapius Sarem said Shimao's entry would set a new standard in real estate development in the Philippines.

The Chinese visit by Sarem and Abaya was made upon the invitation of Shi, who came to Manila in March to sign a memorandum of understanding with the BCDA for a joint development of a six-hectare portion of land at the Global City.

"This is one of the biggest partnerships of the government for property development in 2007," Abaya said.

This mall feature boost the sale of the conversion program of the BCDA, and enhance its revenue generating capabilities, translating to more funds for the AFP modernization program and other beneficiaries," he added.

Global warming ...

From page B4

and nitrogen oxide compounds—the greenhouse gases.

Professor E. Lal of the Ohio State University School of Natural Resources states: "Restoration of degraded soils is a win-win situation. While improving productivity through enhancing soil quality, restoration of degraded soils can also sequester carbon and minimize the risk of the greenhouse effect."

As the farm level, changes in current practices can include several measures. Examples are the introduction of land-saving crop varieties or species, switching cropping sequences, saving water, adjusting the timing of field operations, conserving soil moisture through appropriate tillage methods, improving irrigation efficiency and implementing proven effective technology.

Instead of an overdose in chemical fertilizers and pesticides harmful to both the land and the environment, a more balanced approach emphasizing organic and sustainable agriculture is the best solution.

It is hoped that, as the planning of the 2008 budget begins with the newly elected senators and house representatives, the farmers and fisherfolk will voice out with the Department of Agriculture in formulating a new program that specifically addresses global warming for the benefit of agriculture and the nations.

The author is Agrimark chairperson/farmer undersecretary of agriculture, and trade and industry. For inquiries, e-mail agrimark_phil@yahoo.com or telefax (632) 8920733.

BUSINESS *Friday*

Business Features Editor Margie Quintos-Espino

'Can we outsource our marketing?'

Q: WE STARTED A COMPANY PRODUCING a cosmetic product. All of us have technical background like chemical engineering, biology, medical science, dermatology, and pharmacology. None of us have had any training or experience in marketing or sales. Can we outsource marketing to an outside marketing firm or company?

A: Yes of course. You can outsource and succeed. Your benchmark and model is Wiki, a company founded and managed by four experts and scientists, and whose core formula is sand and RAM chips common. The group focused on designing and testing the most innovative sports footwear. There, when they were ready to produce and market, they decided to outsource everything and not only marketing. Everything—marketing, distribution and sales, production, accounting and finance, HRD, even corporate planning. They concentrated on their "core competence," namely, designing and developing the best running walking sports footwear.

In the Philippines, we now have reputable and responsible groups of marketing experts to whom you can reliably outsource your marketing especially the marketing of a new product/service. Let us mention a few of them and others each of them is known for.

First is Fred Rodriguez's marketing team. Fred was the ABS Philippines president who turned around ABS Philippines during his watch and made it the most growing and most profitable ABS affiliate in the world. When he retired, Unilab got Fred who brought his marketing team to manage the market launch of JH Cole and made it succeed in winning an unprecedented first year entry market share of 12 percent. That share figure grabbed on the very first year market leadership from Lactacyd, a dominant feminine wash market leader for many years. The marketing services of Fred's team can include taking care of the every aspect of product development for a new product, to consumer promoting, to market and sales entry planning, to store material launch, to maintenance, and then to turnover to your own marketing team either as agreed period of time.

We should also mention the team of Ed Hidalgo that is doing relatively the same thing before he retired. Ed was the president of Warner-Lambert in Thailand and then in Malaysia. He started his own managing he now produces cut-loss of Orange sugar producing company. There's also the team of Alex Castillo before he retired about two years ago. Alex was CEO of Del Monte and was responsible for the successful launching of a good number of Del Monte new products like the Del Monte Spaghetti and the Del Monte canned juices.

The distinct advantage of outsourcing your new product marketing to experts like Fred, Ed and Alex is the time advantage. To get your new product to yourself, aside any unprofitable prototyping in the market, you don't have to wait until your own marketing team have been properly trained in new product marketing and have reached the maturity stage of their learning curve. The outsourced marketing team does this in month No. 1 for you. They are also the learning base of your own marketing team who you can attend to the outsourced team for their training and learning of the necessary marketing technology.

There are many other marketing consultants or groups who can do the same thing for you. Start asking around and networking. Our readers, you can join the Philippine Marketing Association and attend their monthly meetings; identify your top five potential marketing partners. Then request for a confidential presentation from these marketing groups (the same way companies ask ad agencies to present when they choose their marketing supplements.) This marketing outsourcing is actually a worldwide trend in the field of marketing experts. They are no longer hired as individuals only but as a group or team as well.

Drop your questions/comments/advice to us at *Marketingrx@pldtdsl.net* (*Ned Roberto*)

Empowering women through abaca weaving

THE SMALL TOWN OF TIWI IN Albay is mostly known for its geothermal power operations and volcanic tributary, but a women's group is also making inroads at harnessing another indigenous resource for which the region is famous: The abaca fiber.

The Tiwi Multipurpose Cooperative Working to Achieve Growth, Among Us, composed of 100 women from Barangay Joroan, is a community of weavers using the traditional skills of handloom weaving and crocheting to create beautiful products out of abaca fiber.

The group is formed with the assistance the Department of Trade in Industry, the Tiwi municipal government and geothermal steam developer Unocal Philippines Inc. The project was initiated to provide livelihood opportunities in the women, who are mostly farmers' wives and some of school graduates, so that they can now able to utilize their idle time productively, helping augment their family income and gaining new skills like crocheting and weaving.

In addition to providing livelihood and skills-building opportunities, the formation of the Among had also helped enhance camaraderie in the community and create a sense of empowerment among the women here. "It inspires me to see how they have transformed from passive to active participants of the community," noted Norma Ganyan, Unocal Philippines' Batangas Operations Manager (Luzon Office), who led the project. After the Program implementation thrown facilitated by RTI Albay, Among initiated organizational changes to have more defined members' roles, responsibilities and accountability—a step towards a more strength organization, enabling them to work on quality and respond to market and product trends."

Projects such as the Among effort are also helping to keep the traditional abaca cottage industry alive in the Bicol region, which has been outcropped by nearby Eastern Visayas as the top abaca producer in the country.

The abaca fiber is indigenous to the Philippines and is known internationally as "Manila hemp." It has a variety of uses such as for cordage, ropes or twines, pulp or industry products, filtermaks, or textiles. The Among group produces various forms of abaca weavings, which are then sold to an exporter and used as raw materials for products like bags, hats, slippers, flowers, floors and clothes. The group also supplies the local market, with the group trading weekly deliveries of products intended for trading in prepackaging.

Among, which means "growth" in Bicolano, has lived up to its name, achieving a 25-percent increase in its working capital since the start of its operation in March 2006. It now recently expanded its range of products and recruited additional members from other barangays. Among president Bettie Rose, who is also the wife of Lourdes barangay captain, says that she is proud of the Among members and the gains that the group has achieved. "In a span of one year, Among have achieved good earnings for the organization and for the members."

Those willing to take risks end up unlocking the marketing code

SHE NEVER THOUGHT THERE was a "career" in advertising and now she is one of the most influential figures in the industry.

Graduating from Miriam College formerly Maryknoll College with a degree in business administration, Maria Theresa Villanueva, or Mares to people close to her, never thought she would make it big somehow.

As average student, she says she actually just worked hard to get things done. She never really had a plan for her future. Unlike most people who map out their lives in their early 20s, the now 40-something just go with the flow and let the cards fall where they may.

But because of her innate advertising skills, she has become one of the most respected people in the industry.

Starting as an account executive, she has risen from the ranks and is now chair and chief executive officer of Publicis Manila.

"I got into advertising by accident. I didn't even know what it was. I found it, I just loved it so much, I did not shift careers anymore."

According to Villanueva, she did not seek a job in advertising. She worked as a vendor, then for a travel agency and later on for the government.

The door to advertising opened for her when the special projects firm owned by Tony Mercado, where she was working, closed down. Her creativity caught the attention of Ed Lhuillier, who at the time was looking for someone to join Basic Advertising as account executive. Without so much hesitation, she said yes.

Although her background was not in advertising, Villanueva's famous dot sort really have a hard time adjusting herself to the advertising world. However, her foundation would later on prove to play a dominant role on her.

MARIA THERESE Villanueva

While others would look on the meticulous as the basis of a good commercial, she would be firm on waiting for the business effect as proven that her campaign was effective.

"Commercials aren't great if it doesn't meet the business results desired," Villanueva says. "I am just lucky to be part of a team where the business results are just excellent."

However, Villanueva noticed that the problem with Filipinos is that they reject advertising agencies in order not with the bother and the brainer concepts, but when they were presented cutting-edge ideas, they become adverse to put their money at stake by doing something that is totally unfamiliar to consumers. They want to play it safe so they stick to the traditional.

"Filipino clients only tell you that only those who are brave enough to take risks are the only ones who end up unlocking the marketing code," Villanueva says.

Sometimes, though, businessmen who were even bold enough to embrace an out-of-the-box concept would later on go back to their "conservative" way of marketing. Perhaps, this is because they are afraid to lose their grounding so they just maintain whatever concept they have.

"This is why the best advertising agency for me is that which can strike a balance between creativity, fresh and something familiar," Villanueva says.

Because of her mompreneuring experience, she was invited by the Philippine Marketing Association, the country's premier marketing organization, to speak on the 18th National Marketing Conference slated on the 23rd to the 25th of May 2007 at the Hotel Jardel Philippine Plaza, Pasay City.

With the theme, "Unlocking the Marketing Code," Mares Villanueva along other marketing experts coming from different fields will be speaking on how both budding and established marketing professionals may be able to decode the secrets in mompreneuring and help break grounds for their respective companies.

For more information call 634-4899 or 634-3722.

In RP, smart card soon to replace coin purse

Brand new electronic payment system uses contactless card technology

By Raquel P. Gomez

SOON THE COMMUTING PUBLIC WILL have no use for the coin purse to keep their loose change because it will be replaced by the smart card—an electronic wallet that can be used to pay anything, from a pack of cigarettes in a convenience store to a ride in the LRT.

Fund transfer like a debit card which can be reloaded with denominations from as low as P10 to a thousand pesos, Versacard is a brand new electronic payment system using contactless card technology in the Philippines.

First Versatile Interactive Solution Corp. partnered with DIG Group of Australia, AT Team of Belgium, and Sony Japan to bring the smart card in the country.

Marcial Ball a million smart cards will be rolled out by the end of August, according to Joseph Ilanfo, president of First Versatile Interactive. He said the company is currently finalizing talks with the LRTA, a fast food chain, and a convenience store where the smart card will have its initial run.

Both said they have already spent around US$10 million for the initial infrastructure of the project that they hope will become as popular as the smart cards Effesh and Octopus card in the railway systems of Singapore and Hong Kong.

According to Octopus Cards Ltd., operator of the Octopus card system, there are currently over 14 million cards in circulation in Hong Kong, used by 95 percent of the population, generating over 10 million daily transactions worth about HK$89 billion (US$11.7 billion) a year.

A smart card looks like a credit card or an ATM card, but embedded within the card is a microprocessor or chip that engages in electronic transaction via a "contactless" positioning of the card on top of a card reader. Data between the smart card and reader is transferred with the use of radio frequency technology (RFID).

Credit cards and ATM cards, on the other hand, use a magnetic stripe that's read by a card reader after the card is swiped.

Another difference is that the smart card's chip, which can be embedded in a wristwatch or a cell phone, can store large amounts of information and can process multiple applications.

Introduced in Europe over a decade ago, smart cards were initially used as a mutual value tool for pay phones to reduce theft. Very soon its popularity in Europe reached a peak, with people using them extensively in the health insurance and banking industries.

Aside from faster transaction and convenience, smart cards are secure. They provide unique proof storage of users and account identities. To guard against counterfeiting, they also employ synthetic DNA technology that marks each card with a particular signature.

Ilanfo said the company will produce two types of smart cards. Personalized smart cards will carry the owner's identity, can be stored with huge amounts and be tracked, while the amount carried is insured. Anonymous smart cards can be loaded up to P2,000.

The cards can be reloaded in convenience stores, reloading counters or ticket vending machines in commercials, and even through cell phones. Ilanfo said that for the first year of the card's introduction, they are targeting seven million users of the smart card. About 4,000 card readers will be installed in different train stations, convenient stores as well as taxi concessions.

"There are many cards out there used for payments, but most of them are bank related," said Ilanfo. "We're targeting the nonbanking community or the mass, because not everybody has a bank account.

"The good thing about the smart card is that the user virtually pays nothing on the transaction he does with the card."

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Takenaka warned on Naia 3 repairs

By Nico T. Clichadora

THE MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT Authority (Miaa) has reiterated its call for Japanese civil works contractor Takenaka Corp. to finish repairs at the long-delayed Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 (Naia 3).

Miaa and Takenaka last last Monday to determine which company would undertake the repairs.

Takenaka emerged from the meeting asking to further discuss the issues.

Miaa, on the other hand, has maintained its view that Takenaka should shoulder the cost of repair because the project was still under warranty.

Miaa said yesterday in a statement that if Takenaka finds the experts' documented evaluation inadequate, the contractor should do its own study and submit its findings.

Naia 3's operation has been stalled because the pre-opening inspections by TCCI Engineers Inc. and the Dee Hong & Partners HK Ltd. last year found that the Naia 3 had structural defects.

The reports said the facility may not stand an intensity-six earthquake and recommended repair work on the beams, girders and post-tension slabs, as well as columns and piles.

Miaa general manager Alfonso Cusi said in an earlier interview that the rescheduling of the Naia 3 has been weighing on its expenses, as the airport authority has been spending an average of P1 million a month on electricity alone since it gained ownership of Naia 3 in 2004.

He said the stalled operation of Naia 3 has also prevented Miaa from making full use of Naia 2, which was designed and built to service domestic flights.

Naia 1, meanwhile, would specialize in serving chartered and freight aircraft if its international flight operations are transferred to Naia 3.

Metrobank to forge deal with real estate companies

METROBANK, THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST bank in assets, is set to enter into a joint-venture agreement with real property developers to help sell its cooperhousing real estate assets.

Bernardito Lagtan, senior vice president for risk management, said that under the proposed agreement, Metrobank will provide the underwritten real property, while the real estate firms will develop and market the assets.

The bank said the developers will have to agree on the sharing of income, Lagtan said.

The bank executive said engaging in more creative ways of disposing its real estate assets was part of its program to shed up income for 2007.

The bank said its net income in 2006 to P5.33 billion, boosted partly by the sale of P9.956billion worth of nonperforming assets.

In a disclosure to the Securities and Exchange Commission, Metrobank reported that its net income in the first quarter of this year reached P1.02 billion, up 30.13 percent from P1.25 billion posted in the same period a year ago.

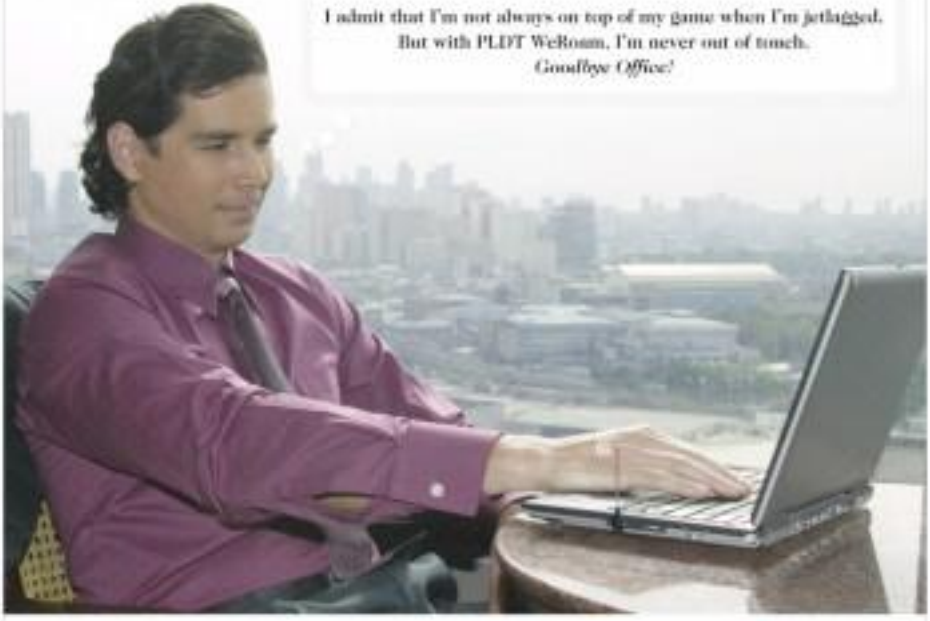
Metrobank said the bank's first quarter performance was partly due to lower income taxes, which cut interest expense by (5.1) percent year-on-year.

The bank executive likewise said the bank engaged in a more aggressive marketing of its low-cost deposits and had an improved deposit mix.

Metrobank said its net interest income in the first quarter reached 39.64 billion, up 5.38 percent from the P3.43 billion in the same period a year ago.

Income from other sources, including income resulting by the treasury department and disposal of assets such as real property, rallied up by 14.6 percent year-on-year to P1.76 billion.

The bank also recently announced the other day that it was set to distribute P1.08 billion in dividends to its shareholders. Abdulla I. Bara



Let's face it, the life of a traveling executive is pretty hectic. When I'm on a business trip, I can't afford to lose touch with company headquarters. That's why I never leave the office without my PLDT WeRoam.

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Mountain madness

Nature's best
Columbia Sportswear Co. interchange core orange jacket and wonderland apricot jacket (worn as a skirt); Chocolate Clothing teardrop-print cube dress; Mykonos yellow top; Columbia Sportswear Co. Eco Progrès linen green bag

THE CITY HEAT IS GETTING quite unbearable these days. Each day is reportedly hotter than the previous one and temperatures are soaring up to 39°. Now, more than ever, is the perfect time to head out to the cool mountainous, not to mention, extremely picturesque, regions of the Philippines.

Thanks to The Travel Club, the forgotten fashion roads headed out to Sagada, a quaint town in the Mountain Province region, on short a couple of fashion editor-ish. The cost: a little inside, which is near the provincial capital of Bontoc, is around 12 hours away from Manila and about six to eight hours away from Baguio by land, or rather, by extremely curvy, sometimes bumpy, roads.

The long drive is well worth it, though, as Sagada truly is a jewel of a place with a lot to offer itself, except five-star accommodations and the like). One can go trekking in Echo Valley to see the hanging coffins, or to Bomod-ok Falls for rappelling, or caving in Sumaguing Cave, supposedly the Philippines' deepest cave. Those not in the mood to exert any physical effort can also just chill-out and savor their heart's content in places like Yoghurt House and Log Cabin Cafe.

Experienced adventure-travelers may consider the ride a walk in the park, so to speak, but to urbanites like the members of the fashion fraternity, "from...emerge perhaps for photographer Bahaghari who frequents the area...it takes two to talk adventure.

Of course, adventure travel requires the right kind of gear. So-called Backpackers, a term loved of backpackers described by National Geographic as "those who seek the serendipity of independent travel without being confined to a bare-bones budget," will have to give up-to-date gear-consciousness briefly. Louis Vuitton bags and Tod's loafers simply have no place in the rough and rugged land. Neither do Prada platforms or Gucci stilettos. The trip calls for comfortable, durable attire and gear that can stand the elements; shield from the searing heat; repel cold mountain water; carry and protect essentials; and keep feet in good shape, in spite of the rocky terrain.

Basil Chan, The Travel Club marketing communications manager, says there are several factors to consider when choosing adventure-travel gear. First, Chan stresses the importance of comfort. "Hydrangeable gear. "You'll be carrying your gear most of the time and where you wander from vehicle to vehicle so it's best to choose something light," notes Chan.

Second, he encourages the use of multi-functional gear. "It's practical to choose items that have several uses or functions. Pockets, for instance, are very helpful, as you can stash away things conveniently. Then special features like rain covers...for one, are also important," he adds.

Of course, durability should always be a given. Meanwhile hydration and protection from the sun's rays should also be taken into consideration. "You should use clothing with UPF or Ultraviolet Protection Factor and tote around Nalgene water bottles or hydration bladders," advises Chan.

Apparently, the UPF rating system is similar to the SPF system used for sunscreens. UPF measures the UV protection provided by fabrics. For example, a top with UPF 50 will only allow 1/50th or what is equivalent to 0% percent of UV radiation that hits the garment to pass through.

"Gore-tex rubber shoes that are waterproof, and are not necessarily for trekking or hiking are also essential for such trips," adds Chan.

The best part about all this is that one need not give up one's sense of fashion while choosing the gear of adventure. As you'll see from Inquirer Fashion's editorial, there is a way to marry style and substance. But as always, don't splurge things too literally. Collect bits & more options and if your gear weight not hold up in the mountains.

Rather, gather inspiration from all this and take a walk on the wild side, as you prepare for your very own adventure.

E-mail the author at gfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Apples' Pickings

Apples Alanis-Sadhwani

Why mountain fashion? Because it's up there

Climb to the top
Clockwise from top: Columbia Sportswear Co. men's granite jungle jacket, blue shorts and cross-over bag; Sanuk shoes, available at Rustan's Makati and Kizuna; Victorinox trek pack plus backpack; Eagle Creek olive-green grip bag; both bags available at The Travel Club; On Her Columbia Sportswear Co. women's ruby ridge cordova jacket; Mykonos yellow dress; Sanuk ripple's, available at Rustan's Makati and Kizuna; Samsonite carry-on bag says-one-stopper, and American Tourister woman brown bag, both available at the Travel Club

Photography Bahaghari (www.bahaghari.org/bahaghari)
Styling Mitzi V. Arriaga
Hair and makeup Laurel Ramos assisted by Luisa Cotoño of Stephanie Salon
Using Red Earth Cosmetics
Models Lia Andrea Ramos and Kristopher Melendrez

Maroon day
Columbia Sportswear Co. women's soft drop, soft shell red-violet jacket; The North Face black shadez jansport bag with black mini dots and Ace Progrès orange bag, both available at The Travel Club; Sanuk siesta red slippers, available at Rustan's Makati and Kizuna

Flashpacker
Columbia Sportswear Co. men's long-sleeve golden glow stretch cross shirt and pants; La Fenna orange chair; The North Face adrenaline shades and blue knapsack; Teva gray shoes, available at Rustan's Makati and Kizuna

White night
On face: white long sleeves with leather trim, printed blue-white mesh, white patent Zanotti flats, alloy Ted's
On bikini: white long sleeves with leather trim, cream/white bandeau bra with black patent tee, all by Ted's

Fetching jeans
On face: patchwork calf leather sleeveless dress, cream Sophie suede platform sandals, brandy-colored Peggy bag in woven calf leather with gold ring design, alloy Ted's
On bikini: off-white calf leather zip-up jacket, patchwork leather skirt, bohemia Bea bag, porcelain Boomerang bag in salt, alloy Ted's

Classic with a twist

Leading around
Cream cashmere polo shirt, printed blue cotton jeans, white patent Zanotti flats, Beach waisted belt in calf leather, all by Ted's

DISPEL THE BLAZING HEAT, LOOK cool and feel cool this summer with the new and sophisticated Spring-Summer 2007 Collection from Ted's. Indulge in gorgeous shoes, bags and accessories made from luxurious natural leathers, in assorted dazzling, eye-kissed colors.

The new collection gives a modern twist to Ted's classics, by adding interesting embellishments to already chic, contemporary designs. Shoes are sculptured into detailed shapes and sizes, offering the wearer something both classy yet delicate.

The influence of the sun, the sea and fresh air is evident in this collection's distinctive of design, color, and weightlessness of materials. Enjoy the best that summer has to offer as interpreted by Ted's.

The Spring-Summer 2007 Women's Collection of Shoes and Accessories are available at the Ted's boutique in Greenbelt 4. Ted's is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc. and is available at Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center, Makati.

Cargo dressing
Orange long sleeved dress, light green Carey calf leather bag, both by Ted's

KICKIE fashionistas wear their craft

- Don't forget underpants are supposed to be worn under the pants.
- Don't forget to tuck your polo shirt in.
- Don't forget there's no such thing as tucked out.
- Don't forget skinny jeans don't make you skinny.
- Don't forget sandals with stockings work only if you're from a department store.
- Don't forget brushing alone is not enough.

EVERYDAY

High hems and hot hues

Text by Jessica Hermoso and Andrea Tobias
Contributors
Photos by Jim Reino-Ponzalan

WEEN hems and bright colors mark Zara's Spring/Summer 2007 collection.

GENERATION iPod look, which can hamper in style from school straight to the barkada hangout

TEMPERATURES SOARED during the Zara Spring/Summer 2007 fashion show held recently at the Fashwell Tent. High hems and bright colors ruled the runway in functional styles that were ready to handle the heat, but were still jet-setter worthy.

Golden tans in light summer pieces, women sporting hot yet edgy designs, and kids in mini-fashionista get-ups strutted on the runway and showed the audience how to wear the various summer-ing fashions for Spring/Summer 2007.

Drawing from were fashions of the '70s and '80s, Zara's offfeminine but romantic ensembles.

Strikingly youthful, Shapes were voluminous with structured accents around the shoulders and waistlines. Soft hues came in the season's statement colors of lemon yellow, salmon and tan.

The summer mood-boosters, the mini-dress, came with modest necklines and billowy harmony that stopped short above the knee. Tropical fabrics and floral embellishments and punchy citrus colors made the classic mini-dress extra cool for the season. Chunky wedges in white or nude—gave the retro a sophisticated look while navy sneakers and cut-outs added hip, casual touches.

Shorts, the obvious summer choice, were mostly tight and thigh-high in khaki, white, orange, and yellow. In keeping with the trendy silhouettes, they were paired with long flowy tops or blazers embellished with frills and pleats.

Khaki office wear also raged on the Zara runway in light fabrics such as flax linen and twitch cotton. Neutral jackets and jazzy vests sprouted up with unexpected red and yellow embroidery.

Wearable elegance with a touch of child-ish whimsy could very well be the catch-phrase for Zara's women's collection, as sporty styles were contrasted with elegant ornamental pieces in vibrant hues.

The Zara Spring/Summer 2007 Collection for men, on the other hand, was simply "fabulous," according to Filipino model Wilma Doesnt, one of the fashionistas present at the event.

Zara offered edgy designs perfect for men who seemed to exude a flair more for fashion while living an active lifestyle. The collection will be a new hit among today's fashion-conscious metrosexuals and bloggerazzi.

Zara, like a few other high-end brands, may not have to forge a selection for men as for women, but its styles definitely have a classic flair to them.

KHAKI is summer is versatility chic.

Experience what a passionate mind can do.

April 28 8pm •KICK-OFF CONCERT
80's Party with Magic 89.9
Bonifacio High Street (near Rizal)

April 29 6am •ANNUAL BGC FUN RUN
Assembly at Bonifacio High Street (near Bonifacio)

4pm •TRICKSTREET
Street Magic by Lionel Richard
(around Bonifacio High Street)

May 5 3pm •FLAG FOOTBALL
BGC Field (near SAS)

9pm •DUSK BEATS
featuring Nina Flora
Bonifacio High Street (near Krispy Kreme)

May 6 2pm •MUAY-ROBICS
Bonifacio High Street (near Starbucks)

May 12 10am •PETOPIA
All Breed Championship Dog Show
Bonifacio High Street (near Krispy Kreme)

4pm •DUSK BEATS
featuring Sound
Park Plaza

May 13 3pm •FLYING COLORS
Sky Flying Parties
BGC Field (near SAS)

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LIFESTYLE

LIFE+STYLED
Thelma Sioson San Juan

Filipino designer makes news again in US

Natori marks 30th year by elevating sleepwear to high fashion

NATORI in woman's "O" color—white—during the Lakandula Awards in Malacañang

IF THERE'S A FILIPINO FASHION designer abroad whose United theme media diligently covers, it's Josie Natori. Just early this week, she was on the headlines of Malaya's Want Daily (WWD) in two stories: the launch of her luxury sleepwear and her acceptance of the Ellis Island Award in New York.

Natori, who celebrates her 30th year in fashion this year, digs in in what WWD heralds as a "new niche in the lingerie industry": luxury sleepwear and glamorous at-home wear. Or cub-catapult in clothes to bum every minute. These new, shallow were only richer for days or night, and pajamas were pajamas, period.]

The luxe collection consists of sleepwear that's too glamorous and beautiful to wear just for sleeping. "I started thinking of the things I would wear while entertaining at home [things to—those off in, "Natori told WWD. have—the accompanied the line.

The line represents Natori's design heritage of 30 years—prints, colors, accents, craftsmanship. It consists of pants [silk, of course], tops, kimonos and as-in-demand slip gowns, and caftans. It's full throws are silk and cashmere and for Spring, linens and silks. It has hand-crafted embroideries, appliqués, beading, quilting and custom-made line from Italy.

"This collection is not about hanging around the home watching television," Natori told WWD. "You can wear it at home while giving a party or wear a glorious look-big kimono out in a party."

Anybody who wears a Natori knows that what she has on is too beautiful just to keep hidden in the bedroom. At nine afternoon party I saw a woman in Natori printed pajamas, accessorized with pearls.

One night in a hotel in Beijing, I had already slipped into bed in Natori cream-and-black pajamas when the phone rang; it was a Iconic Manolos Amander (why wasn't I surprised?) calling me to meet down in the lobby for some life-and death errand. And I did rush downstairs, in those Natori pajamas, with a red pashmina thrown around my shoulders. Needless to, Manolos Omnight I was ready to step out again. From then on I knew I could get away with those silk pajamas in a hotel lobby.

That's how rich the Natori print heritage is, and how Natori has elevated sleepwear and sleepwear to dressy, even luxurious fashion. Imagine topping this price archive of 30 years for a celebratory line of sleepwear.

Emotional

It was an emotional Natori who received the Ellis Island Family Heritage Award on April 17. The Awards are annually presented by the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation.

"They had this picture of me and a timeline of my life. My mother flew over from the Philippines, and I was crying. It was an honorful and touching," she told WWD.

It's been 30 years since Natori, an investment banker, started her fashion business. Her first collection was a group of 12 pieces. Today, Natori is a global brand with a presence in 1,000 stores worldwide.

NATORI Ruby Cantuba

ELEGANT
Coppola
Chemise

Shakey's

Dine'n Drive
Raffle Promo

1st Prize
The all-new
2007 Honda CRV

2nd Prize
2 Hong Kong trip packages
for 6 (4 days, 3 nights)

3rd Prize
10 Acer Laptops

4th Prize
10 Nokia N73s
(Rose Edition)

5th Prize
10 300 Apple iPods

6th Prize
10 Sony DSC-S650
Cyber-shot Cameras

Consolation Prize
100 Shakey's 200 Certificates
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to win
the all-new 2007
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Promo period:
In Metro Manila: May 1 to July 31, 2007
Draw Date: In or August 3, 2007
Deadline for the submission of entries:
In July 31, 2007

For list of participating branches: 11 to
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See posters and flyers for details

It's gotta be
Shakey's

CENTURY Tuna Superteen winners Ram Sagandoni Petra Ortega in Boracay

ORTEGA posing for Raymund Isaac during the shoot for Century Tuna's new ad campaign

SAM Sagud's winning form

RAYMUND and Nikki Ivory on work

HANDSOME hunks Marc Nelson, Brad Turvey and Ruelian Fernandez

HSBC'S Maurice Yap, cousin of Tim Yap (right), Celeste Tina Lim, Jane Ong and Anne Marie Manateg

HAIRO Dalmati and Margaret Wilson

CENTURY Tuna marketing manager Ayel Evangelista with the winners

ELAINE Yap and DJ spinner Karl Dy

So hot yet so heavenly

IT WAS A HOT, HOT SUMMER NIGHT and parties heating up forming, polonggo...as popular Century Tuna held its 7th pothook Beachfest 2007.

The fantastic two-day Century Tuna Sunset Party was hosted by beautiful DJ and TV host Iya Villania and cyber-smart actor-model Derek Ramsay, no less.

Top personalities, media people and Superbods finalists, in their tuloise beach garb, arrived in droves after a 15-minute ride on SeaAir, the official airliner of Century Tuna Superbods 2007.

Once I had settled in my hotel room, as the head of the PR office, myself, was invited over for the chill-out gig in Club Shake, where we sampled the sassy delight of Century Tuna's new yummy variant...which has, take note, 50 percent less fat and less salt, with a sassy hot and spicy flavor.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Nine Haypen using Kodak EasyShare

In the afternoon, games turned up the heat as they competed in the celebrity beach games such as extreme relay game and fishing challenge, among others, polonggo.

In the evening, polonggo, it who time for the most awaited event on the island. Twenty-two super healthy-looking semifinalists from Manille were joined by the eight wild-card contestants from the go-see held earlier in the afternoon, and they hustled it all out for a chance to become Century Tuna's next male and female healthy image models.

The contest was looking for models who have "not only gorgeous bodies and passion for healthy lifestyle but also great confidence and motivation to succeed in whatever he or she pursues in life," according to organizers.

Rhine Marielle Santos of Cinderella cut short her vacation with her family in the US just to be with her fiancee Century Tuna's hottest, young and hardworking Leo Po. She wrenched the grand finalists on stage as they were all-white Twinkle Terrazzo Swimsuits and brand shoes, by Bread Shop, all available in Cinderella, mostly.

The contestants were later whittled down to 12 finalists, who each faced a challenging

STEPHEN Go, Cinderella's Humble Santos and Rhine Yap

SEAIR'S Pamela Tan, Century Tuna's Leo Po and Robert Dean Barbers of the Philippine Tourism Authority

ABS-CBN's Bills and GMA's Ogie Lopez

GMA Aljon, Gingoog, Rona Carreon and Gerkie Dizon

Q&A portion with the judges: supermodel Rhein Navarro; international top fashion photographer Raymund Isaac; brilliant fashion director Bobby Carmona; adorable Mega Publishing Group president and CEO Sari Yap; corporate imaging specialist Jojo Dingcong, PEP's sexual adventurer Maurice Arcache (sit to rest); PCAV Communications vice president Ariel Garcia, and Century Tuna's superb marketing manager Ayel Evangelista.

One dainty contestant, who cried while explaining how she wanted to get into modeling but couldn't seem to make it because of her dark skin had the audience applauding for her, and made a golden-hearted Bobby Carmona promise her over the not-that-he was getting her in a model, which made her cry more out of happiness, polonggo.

Finally, it was time to announce this year's Century Tuna Superbods winners. And the lucky two were bright and good-looking Stan Siegod and sunset and eye-catching Ruby Ongpin. They each won an exclusive one-year modeling contract with Century Tuna worth P500,000.

The first runners-up were Miss Teatin and JC Tiuseco. Second runners-up were Dorothy Aragon and Ralph Rufin.

Winning the People's Choice Awards were Alison Andres and Jamie Roque, who got the most number of votes from texters. They were home with P50,000 each.

After the contest, it was time to party, and party we did (especially the ones who didn't win.) as the fun media dubbed our tag (U-Kan'T) it (hopefully.

Hosting a great time were Robert Dean Barbers, general manager of the Philippine Tourism Authority; Imelda Isaf Patricia Tan, vice president of Seair; Sodor Pitargue of PCAV Communications, Century Tuna's advertising agency; Camille Prats and gorgeous Phoemela Baranda, and last year's Superbods winners Ara Mallaris and Michelle Pedrosa.

The invitees were treated to lab raffle prizes such as Sony PSP Apple iPod Video, Canon Digital IXUS 850 IS, and Nokia N76 mobile phones.

At 4 p.m. the following day the Superbods 2007 winners started their shot for Century Tuna's print ad campaign, right on the beach.

The print ads was shot by no less than mega fashion lensman Raymund Isaac and directed by PCAV Communications' Ariel Garcia and Rizalie Reyes.

It was three, one, taking shots of them. Bay, mond and I made them go through several shots that would be used for an ad campaign in June and July.

On this page are the group photos we took while the photo shoot were on till sunset, polonggo.

In between takes, we asked the 20-year-old Stan, who hails from Sta. Mesa, Manille, what her plans were. "After my commitment with Century Tuna, and besides modeling, I also want to have a stable career in the future," she said. "Of course...I aspire to be true and healthy until I reach my golden years."

CENTURY Tuna's Donna Morales with Tina Tan, Evangelina, Gigi Angkee and Heart Ramos

JUDGES Jojo Dingcong, Ariel Garcia of PCAV Communications, Evangelina and Bobby Carmona

GLOBE Rizalique's Dinnie Lee and Charmaine Palermo

JUDGES Rica Sarrosa, Raymund Isaac, Sari Yap and Maurice Arcache (as in, one)

MIXER, Bevin Javier

TV 5's gorgeous Phoemela Baranda

I also asked Stan his plans. "Opportunities knock but once in our lives and I don't want any regrets that I wasn't able to try," said the 21-year-old hunk from Manille who plays basketball for San Sebastian College. Seeing how tired he was, not asked him a final question, "Which is more tiring, doing photo work or basketball? With his fourish smile, he answered, "Photo shoots."

With the winners' undeniable X factor and their intelligence, we definitely see them hitting it big as the new faces of Century Tuna. Their future in the modeling industry looks bright...dahlings.

Century Tuna Superbods Beachfest 2007 truly gave us new faces and bodies to snack out for to take give in one of the grandest Boracay beach parties this summer, thanks to the help and professionalism of PR high priest, E&E Bureaux of Fourteen Publicity Network Inc.

Hey, polonggo, not never leave it would be your fault in heaven.

CENTURY Tuna 2007 male finalists

CENTURY Tuna 2007 female finalists

MODELS Joy Cavaldo and Mia Bolivar. Bodden's '70s-inspired caftans and pareos

Loose change

FASHION designer Eddie Bodden showcased his latest collection at the recent Philippine launch of Absolut Apeach, the newest variant of international liquor brand Absolut Vodka.

Inspired by the iconic fashion of the '70s, Bodden created curbas and peasant dresses in printed chiffon in the colors of the season—peach and yellow. Underneath the dresses were sandal dress and tops in geometric, abstract and Peruvian prints.

Filipino designer makes news

From page B1

ounce banker and the first female vice president in investment banking at Merrill Lynch, ventured into designing and selling hand-embroidered blouses from the Philippines...in New York, since her first account which was Bloomingdale's, she's turned Manet into a world fashion crowd.

Last month's Manet was presented the Lifestyle Award at Mediaedge:ig by Premiere Macapagal-Arroyo. That, we, hosted on WWD, (Who says only Imelda Marcos makes it to WWD?)

Irene's dinner

One evening recently, Irene Manet Arroyeta welcomed a handful of guests to her Wellesley residence for a dinner she hosted for the dinner Art Gallery staff.

The dinner was for gallery managing director Richie Lorima to introduce to society Arroyo's hotel current, 'Sad Boarwomino.' Sad is the daughter of Arroyo's sister Elvira.

Among the guests were Lupec Montano & owner Cedie Lupec Vargas (whose son is a good friend of Irene's son); Ayala Museum's new director Petty Member-Johnson! (whom we know as one of the country's top vamp models before she left for studies abroad); and Ilhem Santa-Cruz-Cruz Raul Manuel.

Julia Yap Ocampo is organizing her book "Dynasties for Mistresses," due to be released, according to her publisher, Anvil Publishing. With daughter Mariaa, who's back here after her husband, Mike Tarroza, finished a film course in Los Angeles, Julia updated her book with a portion on tutoring. (Not moving in to a romance way.)

We asked Julia over dinner at Nicky Reyes' house if today's emboldened mistresses still follow some etiquette. Julia said they do. Why do we get the impression that it's over the wives who run the etiquette line? For that matter, why are a book on "Etiquette for Filipino Husbands"?

"Gusto ko malaman niya na siya lang ang secret ingredient sa buhay ko."

Posible 'yan kahit nasa Malaysia si Labs

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maxis

opo kabalikat, ang lakas n'yo sa Globe

LIFESTYLE

Take cover and recover

MOST OF MY man-toweldragging friends come home from the beach and complain to me about the leathery and blotchy state of their skin, then ask me what they can do about it.

They know how fanatical I am about these things so they already are only willing to work on their face area.

My compromise is to remind they include the neck because there is no use having a pretty face for it to having an old, crepe-y neck!

Foundation

The perfect formula will erase imperfections and still bring your skin as close to flawless as possible. Get one with a treatment incorporated so you are not just hiding the problem but restoring it at the same time. Listerol to hear often.

L'Orèal-de La Mer Treatment Creme Foundation SPF 15 (P5,100) or Shiseido Sheer Foundation SPF 15 (P4,575). Those who are believers in La Mer Cream would be pleased to know that the same ingredients such as the blue algae among other marine components are incorporated in the foundation.

Creme is perfect for normal to dry skin types while Fluid is for oily skin or a combination of other skin types. There are six timeless skin shades to choose from—from pink to yellow tones. It is expensive but this will be your moisturizer, sunblock and foundation with medium coverage in one.

2. Lancôme UV Expert BB5 Shield SPF 50+ makeup base (P1,495). This is a tinted moisturizer that gives sheer coverage, a glow and looks fresh to dewy-on, dull and sun-abused skin. It blurs out minimal skin imperfections, protects against the sun and pollution, and brightens skintone through its active ingredients of licorice extract and white willow extract. Yellow tones and dullness are actually corrected over time.

White friends

Brightening/whitening skin care products are your friends.

Once again, I cannot stress it often enough, products labeled whitening will not make you Michael Jackson-white! They will just bring you back to your original lightest baby skin color so their main target is to clean up skin damage so your skin will be even-colored all over.

Stop telling me you are proud to be brown and don't want to be Caucasian white because indeed you originally were, it really isn't going to happen. You need serious bleaching and skin peeling for that.

Products labeled whitening do not peel your skin; they will only make your skin even, so it's best to use them day and night for good results.

You should apply the whitening products on your neck as well because the dichotomy between the neck will be very noticeable as the neck is close to the face.

Lancôme Nutrixoblanc essence (P1,495), Clinique Dramatically Different Clarifying Lotion and Estée Lauder Cyberwhite.

One new product I recently tested for a full three weeks did not use whitening or brightening in its claims, but the result definitely a lightening of the skin on the face due to the fading of minor dark spots from the sun and old pimple marks. It is called Re-Nutriv 360°.

Each step of the treatment has a dual or greater purpose. The base wash contains 19 percent active vitamin C to target age spots and discoloration.

The Skin Mist contains peptides from rice proteins known for firming the skin, reversing wrinkles and preventing new ones from forming.

The Cell Renewal Fluid allows the exfoliation of even the most sensitive of skin because it uses Polyhydroxy acid instead of AHA or BHA. So dry, damaged dead skin is removed to allow new skin to emerge.

The UV Block Radiance SPF 18 for Day and Night Complex promotes DNA repair and overnight skin.

The result: No Skin 2007 costs P 18,000 or so.

Acne, hyperpigmentation, huge gaping pores? Already it is more or effective who come to me with this problem as they don't use SPF on very acne-prone, and have seen so basic soap and strict skincare regimens. Others just have a tough battle with hormones.

MAKEOVER 911

Kissy Sakai

LA MER Treatment Fluid Foundation SPF 15

LA MER Treatment Creme Foundation SPF 15

LANCÔME UV Expert BB5 Shield 50/1.69FL OZ/50ml

LANCÔME Blanc Expert Nutrixoblanc XC1

LA MER Foundation Stick for cream-to-mineral coverage

Clarifying program

Check with your dermatologist and inquire about the Obagi Nu-Derm or Glytone clarifying program. This is akin to starting out with a clean slate. It will dry up the acne, peel off the uneven and rough upper layer to reveal dull, off, newer-than-pores' appearance.

These will be redness, soreness and peeling but the results in 90 days will be worthwhile.

The catch: Once you start using this, though, you cannot leave the house without at least SPF 45. Even indoors. I would say SPF 30 and sleep with an SPF 15 moisturizer up to three months after the end of my Obagi program.

The treatment gets me the skin of an 11 year-old so I'd have skin lost on 11 more complexes.

Expensive huh? Isn't it cheaper to just skip some beach trips or apply SPF 30 or up when you are there? Prevention is cheaper than the cure.

My best beauty bet

Olay Total Effects has made a believer out of this recovering beauty-product junkie

By Irene C. Perez

FOR SOMEONE with skin issues since puberty and who had her first dermis appointment in fourth grade, I was definitely up for the Olay Total Effects challenge.

I've always had problem skin. I started having breakouts even before I had my period. And oh, the zits didn't just hover my face; they spread like an epidemic all over my neck, back, chest, shoulders, even my upper arms! I was a total beauty. Dramatic yes, if you had seen my seventh-grade self with long, thick wavy hair, and pimply face half-covered with heavy plastic eyeglasses in the '90s. I was nice.

While many other 13-year-old were busy discovering boys, I was busy wondering why other girls' brown pupils didn't have a bunch of pimple, why their faces were as supple as a baby's and mine was swam oil until 24/7.

My "condition" started my mothers and, like any other loving one, she got worried about my facial skin. She tried various remedies, including the clinic-hopping in search of the best dermatologist who would be my "saviour."

Holy Ines

A dermatologist visit in the '90s meant a lot of pricking, a cocktail of "human medicines" then formulated chemotherapy, and hefty doctor's fees.

Glory Ho. I was a skin sensei hell with white walls. The doctor (I'm not even sure now if she was a real doctor) asked me to lie down, put some gooey cream on my face, and prick, prick, prick she did. The experience literally left me scarred for life, because while she assured me that my pores would close up "soon"—thanks to my young skin—the pockmarks have stayed proudly open.

And no my mother cleared me to Clinic No. 2 where I received, need another pricking happy doctor enough, at 11, I was already used to painful and obscene procedures. One thing I noticed, though: she gave the same products she'd prescribe to patients 20 years older than I was! One was a calamine lotion (but not the pink one I colored, which I had to apply on all affected areas daily. Just imagine the pink stains on my clothes and sheets).

Beauty junkie

What came next was a haze of doctors, and medications, antibiotics, cherrying lotions and pimple treatments which went increased in dosage each month be-

THE BEAUTY multi-tasker that wows customers.

THE AUTHOR

cause my skin just wouldn't cooperate.

I knew what 30% AHA and BHA meant for my forehead (I have t-zone). I knew what hypo-allergenic and non-comedogenic meant before I could manually extract square roots. I knew what glycolic and salicylic acid did before I had a chemistry class. And by sixth grade, I was using heavy products meant for women in their 30s, and this showed me: What the hell would I be using when I reached 30?

And that came (they found it here).

The product went to fight the seven signs of skin aging which are fine lines and wrinkles; rough skin texture; uneven skintone; dullness of skin surface; visible pores; blotches and age spots; and dryness. It happens to have all three. Thanks to being a human acid-breakout advocate.

Some may say an anti-aging regimen is too early for someone in her 20s, but I was probably on menopause earlier than your kids. So I had my free Olay Beauty Imaging System (BIS) scan a month ago to test my skin, and there it was: dull, discolored, rough, with age spots and giant pores.

I replaced my old moisturizer with Olay Total Effects and used it daily for 28 days as a confidence since it has UV protection.

Identified early had your with Marvyn Quisumbing as its brand ambassador, Olay has Vitamins as its key ingredient, which is a combo of Niacinamide (vitamin B3), Panthenol (vitamin B5) and the skin saver vitamin E.

Multi-tasker

In the first two weeks, I noticed a change in my skin texture. The product didn't cause whitening, but my skin was brighter and smoother. The dark areas where the pimples had existed were smoothened.

After two more weeks, there was a noticeable improvement in my pores, which now appeared smaller. I used to unusual my eyes, including the brow bone, and my dark underwire circles diminished. In a bonus, my wrinkles became finer.

My second BIS scan a month later revealed that my skin texture had improved by 19 percent; wrinkles, 100 percent; pores, 68 percent; and spots, 88 percent. I guess that should make a believer out of me who has a twelve-year-old to train.

I've long been looking for the perfect multi-tasker: a gentle moisturizer, brightener, healer with sun protection that would also serve as a makeup base. I've tried a number of over-the-counter products both local and foreign, from tinted ones to ones touted to those with "problem."

Most have left my skin greasy, some are just too expensive for their value, still others pretty much didn't do anything. Olay Total Effects is the best bet so far for this recovering beauty-product junkie.

The Olay Beauty Imaging System scan is available at the Olay counter in Watsons, SM Makati. Visit www.olay.com.ph.

E-mail the author at iperez@inquirer.com.ph.

GOINGS ON

Cool, sophisticated brand endorser

OLEG & MIKE'S SUMMER 2007 campaign presents young actress Rhia Salvador as The brand's newest endorser. At 19, Salvador is proving to be a perfect endorsement. She won a Best Supporting Actress award for "Tabon" and a title/role for "Shake Rattle Roll" that gave her a Best Actress nomination. She's a mainstay at ABS-CBN and was crowned the "Dance Princess of the Philippines." Her Filipina-Portuguese combination yields a cool yet sophisticated attitude, reflective of the brand's Modernesse-meets-Mediterranean inspirations, a must-have part of summer sunsets.

FASHION EXHIBIT. Mark, set to open mid-at Greenbelt 5, is a lifestyle boutique that's attracting great attention from fashion enthusiasts. A sneak peek into the store's offerings is an exhibit of the finished 3 looks until May 6 featuring eight of the country's top designers and style experts.

GLAMOROUS FEELING. Get a chance to win an overnight stay in Cebu-some beach resort and a trip to Boracay with accommodations at Pablo Pacific or Crimsonlodge Resort Boracay suite.

WEDDING FAIR. Solon Shangri-La Hotel and Wedding Essentials Magazine host the opening gala of the "I Do" wedding fair with a fashion show today at 6 p.m. in the Shangri-La Ballroom. Guest designers and bridal stylist Jeanne Aloja, Jose Bautista, Solon Gonzalez, Kenneth Chai, Bobbit Co, Cameron Lazaro, Brian Leyva, Mikaella Lee, Claus G, Pamela Gallegos, Randal Solomon and Eliane Co. On May 5, the wedding exhibit opens at 10 a.m. at the Ballroom and at exclusive rendezvous for brides from the country's finest jewelers at the Solo function room. Miss Featured are wedding coordinator Pika Ilori who will talk on wedding trends; wedding hangs shot with Fred Wedding Photo Shoot; FHOP wedding designers Issues on how to choose the most flattering gown shape for your figure. Dinner-wedding do's and don'ts by Fearless Gilles; wine appreciation and wine tasting hosted by the Philippine Wine Merchant. Bio Chateau organizers promising extra a groom's fashion show by Berg ams. Highlight of the fair is designer Frederick Peralta's "The Bride Empress" concept and fashion show. Reservations at Solo Cell 0922 8383814.

FLORAL GEMS. International florist designer Jane Arrington-Jones will conduct a demonstration titled "Floral Revolution," May 10-12, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Dusit Dusit Thani Manila Ballroom. Glass Box City. On the first day, Jane will explore the latest designs and techniques in wedding floral arrangements. The second day will be devoted to floral arrangements and corporate parties and the last day will be on centerpieces to enhance and make flower arrangements unique and stylish. Sponsors are Asian Floral Exhibitors, Plantscapers Exhibits and Tropical Plants, and King Cross Flowers and Plants. Call 8168847, 4153501, 8351180 and 8884116.

YOGA CLASSES. International lyengar yoga instructor Cir Sonnet will conduct yoga classes from May 5-14 at the Manila Polo Club Private Center, 11 Mckinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati. Call 8842215, 8812182/86 or e-mail cris.mercado@yahoo-mercado.com.

ON KEEPING with the drama: Raja Flora Filipina, 33 FDAP members and guests will create terror on with Philippine flowers for the regalia.

DOT spearheads grandest Flores de Mayo

THE ANNUAL FLORES DE MAYO (GRANDE) organized by the Department of Tourism, the City of Manila and UniLever will be held May 6.

This the festivity Joseph the Blessed and the Festival is part of the country's efforts to promote culture and the arts, highlighting the global competitiveness of Filipino fashion designers.

The organizing group is headed by Ben Paredes, founding chair of the Congregacion del Santissimo Nombre del Niño Jesus. He said the Congregacion would shake sure that the liturgical significance of the festival honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary was preserved.

Theme this year is Raja Flora Filipina. More than 30 members and guests of the Fashion Designers Association of the Philippines (FDAP) will create terror with Philippine flowers.

Paredes said the highlight of the event is the competition among designers, awards for outstanding creations are dubbed La Flor de Manila, Reina de las Flores and the most significant Rose Medley.

Participating designers are Francis Calingacion, Johnny Maul, Dello Penguin, Pepe Manaloto, Joel Escobar, Jayson Ng, Jesus Mariano, Richard Pupa, Rholand Flores, Dennis Gaerlan, Jean de la Cruz, Ribbs Kasten, Leo Perez, Edsa Encarnacion, Rizaldee Rimon, Mikki Pilapil, Dennis Layus, Dimples Lim, Julius Oreste, Rommel del Valle, Bobby Arjona, Rossi Ramirez, Russel Torres, and Angelo Rivera.

Guest designers are Jhpe Quinco, Nicky Marasigan, Pewel Dewata, Jhae Aligno, and Glenn Lopez.

Leading the festivities are Director, Manila Mayor Lito Atienno, Unilever chair/CEO Ian de Medio as honorary mayors and Rosemary Concod as Diamond de Mello. Rivera as honorary mayor.

The festival will begin with the procession of the regalia at 5 p.m. at the Rajah Sulaiman Park in Malate. The procession will pass through the north bound lane of Roxas Boulevard and end at Pareto Bay, Intramuros.

After the procession, a dinner show hosted by Lou Martinez and Rita Cuiland will be held featuring Mendez Lanchangco, Pinoy Pop Idols of GMA 7, Aerosa and Evangeline Dorotan, Cinderella Lola Dream Company of El Fundo of Santa Cuillego Epanow and Sonny Pontecio.

Beach Bagsaman will provide various Filipino events for the evening.

Tickets cost P600 each. Call 5279002 and 5208021 local 107.

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WESTERN UNION

NOOKA Zen stone-hour: in progression of 12 dots. Also available in black, red, olive and yellow.

4 MORE modern ways to view time. Nooka Zen is unisex and waterproof like all other Nooka watches. Also available in black, white, red and orange.

A 'noo' way to tell time

THE NEW WATCH ON the block is called Nooka, a creation of award-winning artist and designer Matthew Waldman who has 15 years experience crafting identities and design systems for clients.

While touring at a large mall clock in a London hotel, Waldman was struck by how few options there were for displaying time. He then created some new ideas and proceeded to pursue them originality.

Waldman came up with the linear and graphic representations of time featured in Nooka watches. The rise of mass investors as time passes, giving weight to an ephemeral and abstract concept.

Drawing upon an intertwined sense of time, Nooka watches push design and functionality forward by exploring time's most basic elements. Nooka creations the presentation of time in a way that highlights the most important information, creating a more natural awareness of time.

The name comes from the native pronunciation of "New Yorker," with a focus on "new" to express the new ways of innovation.

The Nooka line presents the passage of hours in progressive linear fans. In time metric, mixed mass investors, giving weight to an abstract concept.

The Nooka Zen displays hours as a progression of 12 dots, minutes flow along the horizontal line below. The stealthed window which toggles to show the date, counts seconds.

Nooka watches can be found at fine retailers across North America, Europe, Asia and domestic including Barney's New York, the MoMA Design Store and Catalogue, and Selfridges in London.

In the Philippines, Nooka watches are sold at Rafael's Jewelery in Shangri-La Plaza, SM Stamford in Globalcity 4, and My Temple in SM North Edsa and Greenway Sonoma.

The One

by Dolce & Gabbana

Darkly passionate fragrance

THE ONE BY DOLCE & GABBANA IS A women's fragrance that evokes passion, pleasure and luxury.

Encased in a classic rectangular flacon with a twist-cap reminiscent of a gold bar, the fragrance opens with a modern interpretation of fresh fruits... juicy peach, delicate yellow lychee and mouth-watering mandarin, lightly contrasted by smooth vanilla.

The scent's core is a mix of outrageously sexy and traditional florals—the rare Madonna Lily blended with classic white flowers jasmine and tuberose. A deep and sensual base reveals the exotic quality of cypress and the intensity of labdanum, combined with dry ambery notes.

The One by Dolce & Gabbana is available at leading department stores nationwide at 30 ml (P2,000), 50 ml (P4,200) and 75 ml (P5,600).

Queen for a day

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15% discount on all Disney and Mickeyana for kids

Free Fresh Lumpiang Ubod or 2 Beverage Garlic Rice for every order of one Whole Regular Chicken

15% discount for a minimum purchase of Php 300

Php 500 discount on WOW Mega Sing Microphone

WESTERN UNION

A fiesta of choices for shoppers at 6 SM malls

SM Supermalls – from up north in Baguio City to down south in Davao City – welcome the festive month of May with an impressive six-mall event on the weekend of May 4, 5 and 6.

Participating in the simultaneous May 4, 5 and 6 sale event are SM Megamall, SM City Bacoor, SM City Batangas, SM City Baguio, SM City Clark, and SM City Davao.

The sale offers shoppers a smorgasbord of choices on a wide array of stores, merchandise and services marked down to as low as half their regular prices.

2 ways to win in only 3 days

Every P500 single-receipt purchase at any participating anchor store or mall establishment entitles shoppers to join the raffle-cum-text promotion for a chance to win one of 20 Xtreme Version 9 Videoke Microphones.

Where to Go for Lifestyle Shopping

SM Megamall is the ideal one-stop lifestyle shopping destination. Besides the wide range of merchandise and services, SM Megamall also features the following:

- **Cybercore**, the coolest place to get wired to the latest gadgets and games.
- **SM Cinema** has *Spider-Man 3*, summer's biggest movie, now showing.
- **SM Foodcourt**, where there's always something yummy for everyone. Now thru May 28, get the chance to win a **trip to Hong Kong Disneyland** with any P61 or P91 value meal purchase inclusive of a 568 ml Pepsi product. Draw date is on May 29.
- **SM Ice Skating Rink**, where you can learn the basics of ice skating like the MILO Summer Sports Clinic (enrollment is ongoing).
- **SM Bowling Center**, where you can have a grand time with Summer Bowl for Kids, 15 years old and below. For only P130, play 2 games and get 8 free video game arcade tokens. Learn the basics of bowling at the MILO Summer Sports Clinic (enrollment is ongoing).
- **Mall hours will be extended up to 11 pm on May 4 and 5.**

One-Stop Family Shopping

SM City Bacoor offers exciting half-price markdowns during its May 4, 5 and 6 sale event. Participating stores include **Toy Kingdom, Watsons, SM Supermarket, Ace Hardware, SM Appliance Center, Surplus Shop** and **SM Department Store**.

On-going at **SM Cinema** Bacoor is the "Ma, Tres, Three, FREE" promo. This offer is valid only during the 3-DAY SALE. Watch *Spider-Man 3*, now showing.

Grand Fireworks Display

SM City Batangas will light up the evening sky with the grandest fireworks display ever at 8 pm on May 4, 5 and 6. Shoppers and their families can go to the open parking area near the Banco de Oro entrance where they can better view the fireworks spectacle.

Hot Finds at Cool Prices

SM City Baguio offers residents and visitors terrific shopping buys at great discounts of up to 80% on selected merchandise including apparel, footwear, health and beauty products, home furnishings, supermarket items and do-it-yourself tools. All these – and more – are yours for the shopping as you shop in a picturesque hilltop setting.

Central Luzon's Shopping Paradise

SM City Clark offers super finds for discriminating shoppers – quality merchandise, fabulous eat-out options, and fun happenings.

Visit SM City Clark's **Cybercore** for the latest gadgets, games, mobile phones and other cool techie stuff! All up for grabs at the "Zone"!

At **SM Foodcourt**, *Dine & Win* with the whole family and treat your self to free rides or games in **Worlds of Fun** when you purchase at least P150 from any SM Foodcourt resto. Hurry, promo ends June 10!

Join Pepsi's *Ring Your Price* with any food purchase from SM Foodcourt and get a chance to shout for your price! Promotion limits from Pepsi are at stake.

At **SM Cinema**, catch the screenings of *Spider-Man 3*, now showing. Buy two show tickets and get one FREE at your next visit.

Weekend Fun Down South

Enjoy shopping at **SM City Davao**, offering lots of items at discount from SM affiliates and mall stores.

Eat out at **SM Foodcourt** or the mall's many restaurants in between your shopping.

Watch *Spider-Man 3* with the whole family now showing. Shopping fun extended up to 12 midnight on May 5. Catch The Company's *Sayaw* movie experience from their latest CD on May 6.

Reserved Parking

SM Advantage and **SM Prestige** members can avail of reserved parking spaces on a first-come, first-served basis at SM Megamall, SM City Bacoor, SM City Batangas, SM City Clark, SM City Baguio and SM City Davao during the 3-DAY SALE.

LIFESTYLE

LEFT: Her, her, her common fashion by Bench during the Club GA party, day 1 of the three-day mega launch of GA Sky Suites; GA VP for Sales & Director Lee, Philippine Air president Nicholas Cuerva, GA president Cielito Lee, and GA VP for International sales Debra Lee

Sky Suites launched to high heavens

LEAVE IT TO GLOBE ASIATIQUE Realty Holdings Corporation, one of the Philippines' top real estate developers, to come up with a smashing three-day mega launch to celebrate its newest project, the GA Sky Suites, soon to be the tallest edifice along Edsa.

The three-day event was held around three concepts: Club GA, Fashion High with GA, and Vivi La Vida.

COLORFUL and cutting-edge characterize the hip-and-happening looks of the Bench Summer Fashion show during the GA Sky Suites launch.

DREAMS ARE MEANT TO BE LIVED.

Get your little piece of heaven on earth at GA Sky Suites. Big spaces, comfortable ambiance and luxe architecture – life is truly bliss. Dreams have a lot of room here, all for you to achieve.

Projected to be the tallest building upon its completion, this stunning landmark is built to break new grounds. The mixed-weight alloy location, a high-tech composite tower and a quake resistant building.

For inquiries, call:
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Model units are ready for viewing.

GA
GLOBE ASIATIQUE
www.globeasiatique.com

Site Address:
EDSA corner
Quezon Avenue,
Quezon City

COLORFUL. Hip, cutting-edge chorus belies the looks of the Beach Summer Fashion show as hosted by GA during the GA Sky Suites Launch.

FRESH! preppy to romantic...easy to wear...fashion that's fit for the summer by Beach denim during the GA Sky Suites launch

Celes

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ELEGANCE. vibrations, and refinement characterize Jose Bedia's chaarlines and architectural collection staged on Day 2 of GA Sky Suites' three-day mega launch.

SIMPLY divine in Suites's booth with this show-stopper

LOVELY Romulo, Secretary Alberto Romulo, GA president Dolly Lee and GA VP for international sales Olivia Lee

Sotto soars high

Day 2 was an evening of glamour and grandeur as Globe Antolgua hosted an enchanting fashion gala featuring the high couture of Inno Sotto.

The night's spotlight was set on the most sophisticated address in high society. Only the elite glided into the red-carpet event hosted by Tessa Prieto-Valdes and Rissette Arreche.

Fashionable women such as Bea Valdes, Mandy Gomez, Anna Angara, Angeli Ojascal, Mia Sarmiento and Vicki Belo were present. Also seen were Secretary Alberto Romulo, Lovely Romulo and Mona Romulo Santiago.

Embodying the GA lifestyle, Sotto revealed structured and exquisite pieces inspired by the GA Sky Suites' modern design as the collection were clean and easy pieces that were modern, sleek, and elegantly understated.

"The silhouettes were away from the body, very clean and contemporary. Everything was pared down," said Sotto. Mid-top heels audience had a treat with the day wear and it be evening gowns that came in shades of bone, beige and camel, and in luxe fabrics such as silk, organza and crepe de chine.

Manila's most fashionable lounged at the top of luxury prepared by Moet et Louis Vuitton. Cool cocktails were provided by Margarita Cuisine Fusion.

ARCHIE Rodrigues, Sigrid Ojascal, Inno Sotto and Bea Valdes

TESSA Valdes and Mandy Gomez

KRISTINE Olive and Florence Chan

GA CORPORATE imaging specialist Jojo Dingcong and chief de jour Margarita Fores

DADDY Tuason

CHESKA Garcia

DAWN Balagot

VICKI Belo

HABIB Hueca, Maurice Arcache and Debbie Tan

ARLF Paloma, Sigrid Feldman, Alicia Dalakian, Djamel and Mia Bernieres

GA PRESIDENT Dolly Lee, GA vice president for international sales Olivia Lee, ARLGMA Foundation's senior program officer (PR and Marketing unit) Paul Vincent Mercado and Epi Quizon

Vegas fun. . . for a good cause

Day 3 saw stars dotting every inch of Globe Antolgua's magnificent isle. The top celebs were there for an afternoon of poker in the town known as Viva Las Vegas.

In the spirit of community involvement, celebrity guests brought their love to the tables with special charity chips. Playing poker for a good cause were Rhichard Poe, Bryan Termulo, Epi Quizon, Boyet Quiroz, Derek Ramsay, Archie Adamania, Victor Basa, Ai Dee, Carlos Agassi, Jay Aquino, Jovan Kambou, Cameron Fitzgerald, Nikki Valdez, Denise Arcache, Kathleen Hermosa, Carla Humphries, Cudd Gribas, Jenn del Prado, Kristopher Peralta, Bea Barrera, Jayson Gainza and Iyanna Dilos.

Epi Quizon emerged winner.

"Globe Antolgua has always been an advocate of charity work so this third day was relevant to our ideal and was a chance to give back to the community," said Dexter Lee, VP for international sales.

Globe Antolgua later donated a check of P500,000 to ARLGMA Foundation Inc.

The three-day launch of GA Sky Suites truly brought guests a taste of the GA lifestyle. They discovered that beyond the left-eye seats, world-class amenities and lush gardens, Globe Antolgua offers a home close to the stars.

The mega launch party was produced by Ann Dingcong, corporate imaging specialist of Globe Antolgua. It was directed by Bobby Carmona.

MARY Lee, wife of Globe Antolgua

stial sizzlers

DANIELLE Lee and Ryan Singson

JILL Gonzales and Tessa Dragon

DA...wardening director Patrick Lydia, Diane Ramos, Chari Santos and Mike Ruthven

KING Cudal, Florence Chan and Millie Bonifacio

TESSA Valdes and Diane Navarro

ELIFF and Maui Rivera

JOHN Tenor, Michelle Tenor, Jenny Santos, Joel Santos and Jonathan Santos

SASON and Rita Parker

NATASHA Antonio and Nicole Jacinto

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Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

New 'Indiana Jones' star talks about his childhood

LOS ANGELES—"There's something you experience as a child when you watch your dad performing heroic misdeeds."

That's how actor Shia LaBeouf recounted his lost childhood in a recent interview. At his tattle 21 more months, is a busy-working in the offing?

He's just bagged the role of a lifetime—Steven Spielberg has chosen him to play the son or sidekick of Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford)—in the fourth and much-awaited installment of the blockbuster action-adventure movie series, and Mini's thriller movie, "Disturbia," last June 8(). I as the US box-office for three consecutive weekends now. In addition, he stars in Michael Bay's big-budget "Transformers" and is one of the voice talents in Sony Pictures' animated movie, "Surf's Up."

The headline-making announcement of Shia's coming to town drew him after the interview. He admitted the press curiosity on whether he has indeed headed the role that any young actor would kill to get, asked about the casting cannot reaching at the time of this talk, the over-while child actor with dark, curly hair smiled and said, "It's good to be mentioned (when) Indiana Jones IV' (after Brad Pitt's 'Kingdom Jack II)."

Welcome rumor

Still, a mischievous grin still on his face, the former star of Disney Channel shows equipped, "It's a rumor that I started on Myspace (laughter). So, but I'm excited for the rumor. And I'm preparing it. It's on the horizon as super, so 14, trying, yeah, I heard that Shia is (being in the family."

But he did tell about Steven Spielberg, who will agree direct the latest "Indiana Jones" film: "He's the producer of "Disturbia" and "Transformers". "When you meet Spielberg, you feel like you're part of his family because he's very welcoming. I'm sure you have all met him and know what I'm talking about. He's a strong yet gentle person who understands that he's an icon and he doesn't overwhelm you with it. He wants to make you feel like he's someone or any one you are him, whatever means."

Lucky charm

Shia added about the man who is having out to be his lucky charm, "When you first get into this business, there are things you tell yourself, like one day you'll meet Spielberg or Scorsese. But it never comes to your mind that you'll tell to really work with Spielberg or go to dinner with him. My mother (Shianne LaBeouf) is Jewish. Spielberg owned a lot to the Jewish community. He has connections and people in power so if his boys

ROLE OF A LIFETIME. Shia LaBeouf is known (known to play) Indiana Jones' sidekick.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Robert C. Agpalo

Stars hold forth

ALL SHOW BIZ PAYS SERVED

Hiring established that stars aren't empty favorites the rum and are therefore entitled to their own opinions, let's listen to some of them and—learn!

Jose Galban: "I never speak to my former lovers, except under hypnosis!"

Brad Pitt: "When I go out, I don't dress so people will know I'm nervous. I dress so people will know I'm nervous. I'm nervous. I'm nervous.

'Spider-Man 3' soundtrack

THE "SPIDER-MAN 3" original soundtrack, released by Reprise Records/Interscope, is now out in the market.

It includes all-new original songs from bands like Snow Patrol, The Killers, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Jet, The Flaming Lips, Velvet Revolver and The Wallflowers.

Its lead single is "Signal Fire," from modern-platinum UK artist Snow Patrol.

NIKKI SALTOTS

New album

Blackbush titled Kenneth make his return to the recording scene with his third studio album, titled "Every Time And Then."

Released under Viva Records, the 14-tune is a collection of OPM sad pop hits.

The current single is Angela Ken's "Break It To Me Gently," re-interpreted as a tender piano ballad.

The album contains 15 songs, including Jett Linard's "Special Memory" and Ray Valen's "Hanggang Ka."

Repackaged

The Gary Valenciano repackaged "Introvoice" album has been released by Universal Records on 4 2007 repackaged Bonus DVD Edition, with the new version of "Stars Must Shine" and "Where I Now You Call."

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7 SPIDER-MAN 3

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7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 ANG CUTE ng INA MO

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3 SHOOTER
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3
6 ANG CUTE ng INA MO

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ROUNDUP

P58.6M gross for Spidey on opening day

QUEZON CITY—"Spider-Man 3" pulled off the biggest opening day and first weekend ever in Sunday with a P58.6-million nationwide gross.

This was announced by Victor B. Cabrera, general manager of Columbia Pictures which distributed the film.

The opening day figures of "Spider-Man 3" are twice as bigger as "Spider-Man 2's" nationwide first day gross in 2004 at P28.6 million, and are 25% percent higher than that of the first "Spider-Man" in 2002 at P36.4 million.

In Mega Manila, "Spider-Man 3" posted a record P16.6-million opening day gross in 302 screens and 61 locations.

Outside Mega Manila, projected moviegoers spent P12.9-million in 239 screens and 21 locations—breaking all existing records in the same demographics.

"Spider-Man 3" executives Tobey Maguire, Bryce Dallas Howard and director Sam Raimi flew to the first two Middleeast adventures.

Curtain call

Star World's glamorous drama, "Fashion House," touches its conclusion on Sunday, May 6, at 10 P.M.

Starring Mia as Ms Derek and Kim gon Fairfield, the season reveals the good, the bad and the fatal effects of characters of a fictional world in Los Angeles' haute couture.

Its whirlwind journey centered on the blind ambition, scheming affairs and vengeful actions of Maria (Jeanne Zinnia), Sophia Blakely (Savannah), Michelle Miller Oberlin (Reviewed), William Blakely (Joel Bryant) and Luke Cameron (Taylor Kinney) and a host of others, as they chase their way to the top of the fashion game or try to find their love.

Star World's "Fashion House" is also available on SkyCable, Cablelink and Destiny.

Rock bonanza

The Uptown Kansas Saint St. Louis University was rated by Rapido City on Aside to their top choice for the opening act of "Chippa Umbrella," a concert for young rock 'n' rollers.

Now on its fifth year, the concert series kicked off to Rapido with Pedals, Sandwich, Seaton Road and the city's young bands performing live.

The series goes on more campus and summer mall tours and beachfronts.

For schedules, visit www.chippaumbrella.com.

LIVING Stars

Editor Dennis G. Velarde

MAKISIG MORALES

I often hang out in the living room where my sis brothers and sisters love to watch television shows and movies on DVD. A favorite of my 4-year-old brother Waldo is "Super Inggo," parts one to eight on DVD. Sometimes I practice singing and dancing there, too. My siblings and I dance to my latest song "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do" (from the CD "Mula sa Puso" [Duets]). I also play make-sing-sayan in the cute, which is actually bigger than our old house. We displayed our "Super Inggo" action figures there, but some fell and got cracked.

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INSIDE

- Bora's celebrity volleyball match H2
- Bamboo sings hope and solidarity H2
- FrancisM's love affair with photography H4

BEVERLY VERGEL

TAIL TALES

We have three Chihuahuas: three-year-old Barge and Ginny and their one-year-old pup Sasha. I first fell in love with their breed after seeing Reuter in "Legally Blonde." I like Chihuahuas because they're low maintenance, easy to care for and intelligent. They have their own dog house and their own bowls and water and evening prayers are imported from Taiwan. The vet makes house calls for them. When my 4-year-old daughter Sydney and I take them to the mall in their cute little costumes, they never cease to delight other people. Barge is handsome, a mahogany Ginny, a purebred from Australia, is our very own Nicole Kidman. She exudes elegance. She has a microchip implanted in her nape, so she can be tracked down via GPS (Global Positioning System) anywhere in the world. She has more, Sasha's very regal with her pink nose and eyes.

Marcial San Diego Jr.

SAM CONCEPCION

BOOKS

I love the book "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" by C.S. Lewis. I first read it to prepare for the Tyrants production of the musical based on the novel in 2002. I played Edmund Pevensie in that play. It's an easy read for kids and tells a great story for everyone. I realized that it's actually an allegory of Jesus Christ's unconditional love for man. I also read "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. There are a lot of things that kids can pick up from books that they can't learn from television.

Rayner Jan Diego Jr.

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SONY Summer pleasures '07 HD

All things boil down to beach volley skills

TV HOST Tisha Silang teamed up with Rodriguez

BOBAGUY ISLAND—FOR TWO days, sands before last, this famous resort island was a magnet for those top personalities determined to forget work and pass the time showing off superior beach volley skills.

The Celebrity Volleyball Championship matches were among the highlights of the four-day "Nivea Beach 2007." Host Tiffany, Nancy Castiglione, Ravel Marquez, Lolo Manzano, Iya Villania, Nikki Gil and Serena Dalanon were among the stars who turned out in the final rundown prior, the former to play inside the sands.

A series of parties that culminated on April 21 featured, among others, Bembya as Edgar and Pinky Up Your Sentiment, the all-girl quartet that sang "Get Up U," the event's official theme.

Marinel R. Cruz

TV HOST Rocco Chavez

TV HOST Sam Oh and columnist Jhiz Isaac

ACTRESS Nancy Castiglione also joined the beach-clean-up campaign in the island

BMD Torres co-hosted the victory party with girlfriend Castiglione and Marquez

TV HOST and VJ Iya Villania

Model Jeff Rodriguez, with partner Silang, mistyped Villania and Oh

VIDEO jock Karel Marquez

LUIS Manzano and Nikki Gil still was on the last day of the celebrity matches.

BAMP model Bubbles Paraiso

Bamboo sings hope to remote villages

'BAGUIO says magkaisa Jaging may mangyaring kay ganda (The morning shines beautifully when we are together)."

Changing Kay Ganda," that '80s pop song, made on a different meaning when the rock band Bamboo sang it to Muslim and Tiduray residents of the remote Dulo Emmanuag in Barangay Pilar, South Upi, Maguindanao, during a visit last week.

The band has been bringing the message of hope and unity to distant villages in Mindanao as part of the Department of Peace's campaign, which was designed to deliver basic services for children in situations of armed conflict.

Lead vocalist Nicolino Medalla, guitarist Im Cruz, bassist Nathan Azarcon and drummer Vic Mercado expressed their support in song while feeding a band to the shivering evacuees. A dozen and de-worming tablets to children who were missed out during routine immunization services.

Dulo Emmanuag, which sits over sprawling hills in the hinterlands of Maguindanao, is almost four hours away from Cotabato City—a remote community run by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"We want to express what we feel in the best way we can," said Bamboo. "We don't speak their dialect but we can say songs to speak to them. Kapag kaya, nasa saisa, kaya naman! (Together we can if we put children first)."

"We are now imagining how we can best help these families," said Vic.

"We know there's a lot to be done and what we've done here so far is just a small step," said Nathan. "But we hope that it is a step toward that direction."

The band visited four communities in Maguindanao and Shariff Kabunsuan where the campaign knows no language or distance.

BAMBOO Mahiwar (above, foreground) attends to a child in the Barangay Dulo Emmanuag in Maguindanao while his band mates look on. At left, Bulacan Provincial performs in a Baguio City concert.

STARS FOR OTHERS

Rock bands vs extrajudicial killings

BAGUIO CITY—Local rock bands and groups from Metro Manila performed in a concert here on April 21 to help drum up support for calls to stop extrajudicial killings in the country.

The Judas Iscariot Guitar Pairs played the concert audience's hearts with his rendition of "Hugas," his original composition.

The concert was staged as part of the Cordillera Day celebration, which commemorated the martyrdom of Balbago chieftain Macliing Dulag and other Cordillera activists.

Dulag, who led the opposition to the Chico River project in the late 1970s, was killed by a government soldier on April 24, 1980.

Pairs sang "Hugas" while watching the names of slain political activists in Northern Luzon.

MUDDYMAY

"Kaya Ko Marka Mangit... tugo ka Ades Clarer... tugo ka Ines Clarer... tugo ka Bunny Sandoz."

Beverly Longid, chair of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), said they staged the concert because they wanted to inform the public about the human rights situation in the country.

Representatives from Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, the United States and Europe attended the Cordillera Day celebration here.

Baguio Mayor Pep. Bautista Domogan, the event's keynote speaker, watched the concert and joined the elders in the patrong, a tribal dance accompanied with gongs and bamboo instruments.

The concert also featured the bands Bloki, Sukdulumang Api, Bersuz, The Weeds, Outo's Tribe, Bulanog Dalawasa, Pimpleh Chende and Mandaeng Bayan and musicians Jess Santiago and Joey "Pepe" Smith.

In a "heroes' tribute" on April 24, the Sukdulumang Group, Dapayan ti Kultura iti Kordilyera (DKK) and children of slain activists performed the song "Dantayo." The performances was accompanied by a torch and candle lighting ceremony. *Analyn Collaco, Reporter/Northern Luzon*

'Spider-Man 3' celebrity screening at The Podium

LEVI

JANNO Gibbs and Bing Loyzaga with their kids

TASHEENA KUMER

BUBBLES Paraiso and MTV DJ John Jos

RED CARPET

DIANA ZUBIRI

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPIN — BY JOSS ARBON

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PAL JUNIOR

MUTTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

LOVEBIRDS — BY ELIZABETH CHONGLO

ATOMIC ANDY/ROSY — BY LYNN GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PANALIGAN

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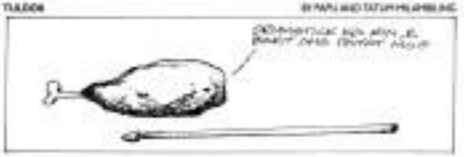

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

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CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

5	2							4
								1
			4	9				
		4				3		
							1	
	6		7	8	3		2	
	3							
		5				6		
7				3	9			
1							8	2

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3	9	7	2	8	4	5	1	6
6	8	2	5	1	3	9	7	4
4	5	1	9	7	6	2	9	3
1	7	4	3	5	8	6	9	2
2	3	5	7	9	6	8	4	1
9	6	8	4	2	1	3	5	7

DIFFICULTY ★★★

The eyes of FrancisM

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Photos by Francis Magbiota

HOUSES

HIS TV HOST/MUSIC ARTIST and self-taught photoshop Francis Magbiota, is man here as four sight. Or, to be more specific, he fell in love with photography at first click.

He considers his friend, Mayward Sin Jose, a radiologist from Nueva Ecija, as his "mentor." San Jose, like Magbiota, serves in his blog (www.magbiota.com), "started this fire in me."

"Mayward taught me the basics, how to play with the aperture, opening, film and shutter speed," Magbiota told Inquirer Entertainment Living Stars.

Aside on a concerts tour in Europe last year, he met (or Mitpen, CEO of Indonesian and president of the Camera Club of the Philippines (CCP).

"He noticed that I was buying cameras and he invited me to join as probationary member of the CCP and I attended a meeting for the first time last December," he recalled.

In the next 12 to 15 months, he'll be a probationary member and will compete in the club's monthly fits. He has joined the club's shoots in places near (Mount Ostry and Mt. Cho Pinatubo) to Baguio.

For Magbiota, photography is "a way of stopping time and capturing memories."

Photojournalism and low-light photography are his strongest suits, he said. Quite naturally, his advisory mentor also does well with show biz photos.

"I document events and have done several portraits of celebrities," he related.

In his blog, he enumerated how thrilled he was to experience the "anonymity" afforded by being behind the camera in the same time, he admitted that his celebrity had allowed him to take photos of famous folks like Sen Mitta and Ralph Recto at the Baguio event. "They recognized this profession (photo)," he wrote.

He's got the best of both worlds.

During the "Philippine Idol" grand finals at Araneta Coliseum, Magbiota, who is a camera judge, snapped candid photos of the finalists in a huddle, praying backstage.

"It showed how close they were," he said.

Needless to say, he is also the official photographer of the Mayalona clan and his favorite subjects are his children—all eight of them.

When sons Dino Moses, 11, and Albin Lazarus, 7, received certificates of academic excellence from school, proud dad was on hand clicking away.

In his blog, he volunteered that films and texts are his photography summons. "They appear to me. They know the concepts of shutter, aperture and low-light photography."

THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S dilemma in "Time to Pose?" Pick a pic and Dino, what is right in front of him? Answer:

WHO'S that girl? Tiad's Rhein Escalante in Vienna during a concert tour

"THE MASK" gave the photographer a score of 3.95 (with 5 as the highest) in the club's March contest in Baguio.

APOPULAR shopping place in Austria, "it's near St. Stephen's Church," the shutterbug says.

TITLED "St. Dino's Fist," this close-up of the eye of his son Dino while looking at a comic was praised by his photography idol Blue Bautista. "Gave me goosebumps."

MAGALONA'S eight kids and wife Pia gathered in their condo unit to welcome him back after a Siberian trip.

BACKSTAGE at the "Idol" finals Gino Magbiogbi, center, is the group's "spiritual leader," says Magbiota. Here, he leads the finalists in prayer.

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SPIDER-MAN 3

JOHN LAPUS

The living room is my favorite spot in the house because it's where my salvation is. Whenever I arrive from work at night I automatically open the TV and watch my favorite shows for about two hours. I go up to my bedroom only when I'm really sleepy. And when I wake up, before I take a shower, I go straight to my living room for more TV-watching.

Marinel R. Cruz

FAVORITE NOOKS